

Tuesday March 26 1996

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# The Guardian INTERNATIONAL

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

46,510

Who are history's most loathed politicians

## The perils of unpopularity



G2 with European weather

Post-punk novelist Kathy Acker

## Leaping the boundaries of sex



Interview G2 pages 12/13

Education

## Can New Labour bag the NUS?

G2 pages 10/11

Europe bans British cattle □ Cabinet opts for no new action □ More CJD cases emerge

# Ministers defy beef outcry

### Children under 'no greater threat'

Patrick Wintour, Owen Bowcott, and Stephen Bates in Brussels

**T**HE Government last night attempted to brazen out the escalating crisis over beef, rejecting plans to cull cattle herds in the hope that international confidence in the industry will be restored and the Treasury saved from huge compensation claims.

As the Government dug in its heels to defend the farming industry — and the potential for pre-election tax-cuts — Britain was left isolated in Europe on a vote of 14 to one in favour of an immediate and indefinite prohibition on all British cattle imports. John Major last night expressed his "astonishment" at the EU's ban to European Commission president, Jacques Santer, who said EU officials would meet today to reconsider the evidence.

On the foreign exchanges the impact of the BSE crisis drove down sterling amid a meltdown in domestic consumer confidence, with the share price of Burger King, including Burger King, announcing they were dropping British beef from their menus. The Government's scientific advisers revealed another two cases of the suspected new strain of CJD.

Plans for a mass cull, supported by the Agriculture Minister, Douglas Hogg, were rejected yesterday at a meeting of a Cabinet committee, chaired by the Prime Minister, The Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, warned that compensation claims from British farmers might cost billions.

Ministers mounted a holding operation hoping shattered confidence could be



A deserted Hereford cattle market yesterday morning which would normally be thriving

PHOTOGRAPH: RUSSELL SACH

restored by the release yesterday of a report from government scientific advisers that children were no more likely to suffer BSE than adults. Ministers also argued that a mass slaughter before the European Union position had been clarified might jeopardise future British claims for EU compensation.

Last night the Consumers' Association accused the Government of failing to reassure the public over the possible dangers of eating beef and beef-derived products. "The Government's advice has done nothing to answer the key consumer concerns about

beef," said director Sheila McKechnie. Somerfield, Britain's sixth largest supermarket chain, criticised the Government response as "deficient" and called for a selective slaughter of cattle.

The Health Visitors' Association accused the Government of putting its own interests above children's health. In separate statements in the Commons, Mr Hogg and the Health Secretary, Stephen Dorrell, rejected calls for drastic mass slaughter and said the risks from eating beef were "extremely low". Mr Hogg attacked the EU ban

as unnecessary, but, reflecting the pressure from British beef farmers, appeared to accept he would consider a large-scale slaughter if confidence was not restored in the future.

In bitter Commons exchanges, Mr Dorrell pointed to the judgment, released yesterday, of the Government's own Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee that "it does not believe the additional measures are justified at this stage".

Mr Dorrell said the committee had repeated its advice that providing present controls were fully implemented

"any BSE-related risk from eating beef or beef products is likely to be extremely small". He insisted the SEAC findings meant there was no case for a ban on British beef from school menus, and urged the hamburger chains to continue to use British beef.

However, private polls conducted for the McDonald's chain over the weekend show 60 per cent refusal to eat British beef, double the resistance to British eggs during the salmonella scare.

The shadow health secretary, Harriet Harman, faced Tory accusations of "talking down British beef" when she

accused ministers of "reckless disregard for public health" and blamed the "dogma" of deregulation for having swept the country into the crisis.

At the weekend Mr Hogg appeared to open the door to a slaughter of at least 4.5 million cows older than 30 months out of Britain's 11 million-strong herd, but industry critics said the move would be premature, worsen the trade deficit, create a milk drought and possibly force the importation of continental herds also carrying BSE. Mr Dorrell last night described EU ban on British

## Against

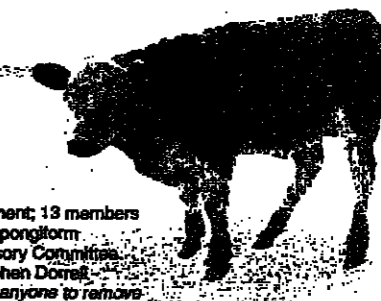
Countries/organizations who have banned British beef:

- 1 France, Germany, Netherlands, Republic of Ireland, Italy, Austria, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Luxembourg, Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Sweden (all European Union countries).
- 2 Cyprus, United States, Egypt, Singapore, South Africa, Qatar, Australia, Canada, Japan, Russia, New Zealand.
- 3 Fast food restaurants McDonald's, Wimpy, Burger King, Wendy's.
- 4 Co-op supermarkets. Several others like Somerfield have promised refunds to customers returning beef products.
- 5 The Association of Metropolitan Authorities and Lancashire County Council (in schools), Consumers Association.

## For

Those claiming that beef is still safe:

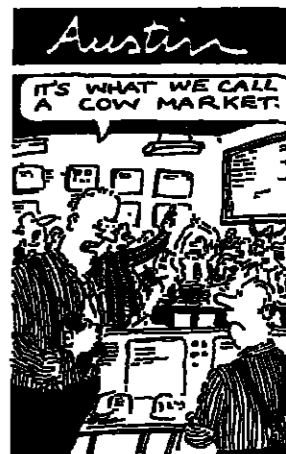
- 1 The British government; 13 members of the government's Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee.
- 2 Health Secretary Stephen Dorrell.
- 3 The Association of Metropolitan Authorities and Lancashire County Council (in schools), Consumers Association.



## On other pages

THE Government yesterday produced tough new measures to fight the panic over mad cow disease. Ministers decided to go back to bed and pull up the covers. See Simon Hoggart's sketch, page 2

Beef crisis, pages 4-5  
Comment, letters, page 8  
Hugo Young and John Gray, page 9  
Roultry prices soar, and City Notebook, page 11



## Artificial heart patient dies

Edward Pillington

**A**MAN whose doctors claimed he was the first patient in the world to be fitted with a permanent electric heart has died, 30 hours after the battery-powered pump was removed from his body.

Surgeons at the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, operated on Abel Goodman on Saturday to take out the device after signs of internal bleeding. The patient's own heart, shown a "remarkable recovery" since the implant five months ago and was considered capable of working alone.

However Mr Goodman, aged 64, died unexpectedly on Sunday night. He suffered a "sudden and unpredictable" change in heart rhythm and could not be resuscitated. He leaves a wife and two children.

Mr Goodman's death is a blow for the hospital, which has been trying to develop an

electronically-powered heart as an alternative to human organs, which are in short supply. The device's apparent failure is likely to raise questions about its long-term prospects.

Mr Goodman died four days after a similar mechanical heart was implanted in another man at the John Radcliffe Hospital. The patient, who has not been identified, was described yesterday as "stable and satisfactory".

When Mr Goodman's titanium heart was implanted last October his surgeon, Stephen Westaby, said he could expect a normal life. "There is no reason why he should not be back riding a bike," Mr Westaby said. However, Mr Goodman was plagued by infections, exacerbated by the fact that the rechargeable batteries were in a belt outside his body. He never returned home.

Mr Goodman, a retired film producer, volunteered to try the new procedure having

## Oliver Stone shuns Oscar night to visit Zapatistas

Ian Katz in New York

**A**S HOLLYWOOD'S chosen few polished their displays of delighted amazement and dignified disappointment yesterday, director Oliver Stone delivered his own Oscar speech far from the Academy Awards ceremony.

"You are great warriors for change and peace," he declared. "Wherever there are human beings in the world we will respect what you are trying to do."

Mr Stone, whose film, Nixon, was nominated for four awards, was not talking about his film-making colleagues. He was referring to the guerrillas of Mexico's Zapatista National Liberation Army, with whom he planned to spend Oscar night.

"You, the Zapatistas, are not little men, you are giants," the director told a group of the guerrillas who welcomed him to the town



Movie-maker meets Mayan rebels

of San Cristóbal de las Casas. "With your presence you have raised the spirits of all of us," Tacho, one of the rebel leaders, replied.

Mr Stone and the talking pig which starred in the Australian film Babe were expected to be the most prominent absentees from last night's ceremony.

The director of Platoon, JFK and Natural Born Killers planned to trek to a remote area in the Chiapas jungle to meet Subcom-

mander Marcos, the Zapatistas' masked, pipe-smoking military leader.

Nixon's nominations include best actor, best supporting actress and best original screenplay but Mr Stone was not shortlisted for his directing and the film flopped commercially.

Mr Stone's entourage of 18 included two scriptwriters, prompting speculation that he may be planning a film on the Zapatistas' 1994 New Year's Day uprising.

## Diane Modahl clears her name over drugs ban

Stephen Bierley in Cape Town

**T**HE British athlete Diane Modahl yesterday won a 19-month fight to clear her name of drug taking when the sport's governing body dropped all charges against her.

Modahl, aged 29, spent 250,000 proving her innocence after being banned for four years in 1994. She tested positive for unusually high levels of the male hormone testosterone in at a meeting in Lisbon.

Yesterday the International Amateur Athletic Federation accepted that there was "grave concern" about the way the drug testing was conducted. Modahl, who is suing the British Athletic Federation for £400,000 damages, said she was "delighted" by the decision, adding: "It has been a costly fight — and not just in financial terms."

Report, page 16

## Inside

**Britain**  
The Marquess of Bristol, a reformed drug addict, is selling paintings and furniture to relieve himself of financial burdens.

2

**World News**  
Indian police and negotiators were trying to persuade more than two dozen separatist militants to leave Kashmir's holiest shrine.

7

**City**  
The Halifax said it had agreed buy life insurers Clerical Medical for £800 million, thwarting NatWest's earlier bid.

12

**Sport**  
Ray Illingworth is expected to step down as England's manager, leaving Lord's to find a new man to shape English cricket.

15

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G2  
Crossword 15; Weather 16;  
Radio 16; TV 16



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2 NEWS

Sketch

Tory petulance leaves bad taste



Simon Hoggart

THE Government yesterday produced tough new measures to fight the panic over mad cow disease...

As the world bans British beef, as ancient British firms such as Wimpy ban British beef...

The Health Secretary, Stephen Dorrell, in a statement both peevish and complacent...

First night

Delicate dancing smooth as Syph

Judith Mackrell

La Sylphide, Scottish Ballet Festival Theatre, Edinburgh

THE archetypal heroine of Romantic ballet is the sylph...

A fairy also wrecks a young man's life in the libretto for Stravinsky's ballet Le Baiser de la Fee...

Baldwin has recently been appointed Scottish Ballet's Resident Choreographer...

Reformed drug addict cutting his losses and leaving ancestral home

Angella Johnson

THE seventh Marquess of Bristol is selling the contents of his private apartments at his ancestral home...

be solved by a PR man and a photo opportunity. Peter Mandelson made a rare on-the-record intervention...

Mr Dorrell's oddest contribution was a petulant remark that "it is no good saying that it is unnatural for one species to eat the remains of another..."

No, minister: the objection is that cattle are vegetarian by nature. You might as well use the same argument to feed your children hay.

Bizarrely, he and his colleagues persistently repeated that all human activities include a measure of risk...

Angela Eagle (Labour, Walsley) was told scornfully that Mr Dorrell would rather take advice from Sir Richard Southwood...

Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, was little better. The thought of him elbow deep in a cow's backside is a pleasing one...

Auditor's report names ex-mayor as corruption scandal over letting of market pitches is disclosed

£1 m Petticoat Lane scam

David Hencke Westminster Correspondent

THE world-famous Petticoat Lane market will be revealed today as the centre of a £1 million bribery and corruption scandal...

An auditor's report will accuse the London borough of Tower Hamlets of "systematic and rife corruption" in running its Petticoat Lane and Brick Lane markets...



Opponent Thomas Whitworth and referee Michael Nolan

Player tells of tragedy in scrum

John Duncan and Clare Dyer

BEN SMOLDON, the rugby player who is suing a referee and an opponent for £1 million after being paralysed in a scrum...

Mr Smoldon, who had moved from the wing to hooker because of a sore neck after the scrums had repeatedly collapsed...

Mr Whitworth, Burton's tight head prop, was generally aggressive in the scrums, said Mr Smoldon...

as tourist attractions. The report names the former Liberal Democrat mayor, Jeremy Shaw, as being involved in the illegal sub-letting of stalls...

In a plot that might do credit to EastEnders, the auditors confirm that one former Liberal Democrat councillor, Betty Wright, used her 79-year-old "aunt", Hetty Hart, as a cover to illegally obtain a pitch for herself...



Of that loss, the auditor finds that £500,000 was legitimate expenditure on administration of the markets. However, he finds evidence of rife and systematic corruption and abuse of the system in connection with the remaining £1 million loss.



Ben Smoldon, paralysed by a rugby injury, arrives at the High Court to pursue his £1 million claim



Rugby heads 'dangerous' sports

John Duncan reports on a game which has the highest risk of 'substantive injury'

RUGBY is the most dangerous of sports played in Britain, according to the Sports Council.

The most complete study into sports injuries, commissioned by the council in 1991 and conducted by the University of Sheffield, found that rugby had the highest risk of "substantive injury"...

Institute and consultant surgeon at Hartlepool General Hospital, rugby holds two main areas of danger: the tackle and the scrum.

arched. But the governing bodies have really made an effort to eliminate this from the game by making it against the rules to deliberately collapse a scrum.

Professor McLatchie's work in karate in the 1970s helped reduce injuries by 80 per cent over 10 years. Similar work is being done in rugby by John Davies...

Heart patient dies

continued from page 1 been told he was too old for a conventional transplant and that he had six months to live.

John Wallwork, a heart surgeon who has led Cambridge's research in this field, said that, contrary to media reports, it was Papworth that had pioneered the first implant of a permanent artificial heart 18 months ago.



Abel Goodman in hospital last month

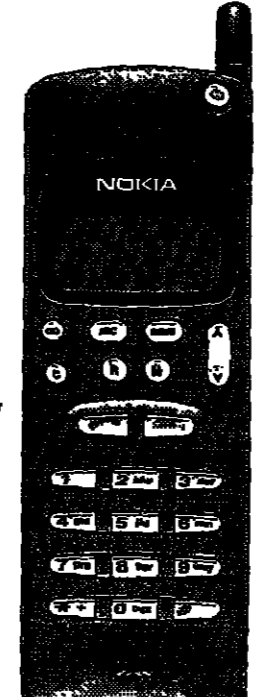
home for several months, but suffered complications and died nine months later. Mr Wallwork said that Mr Goodman's death underlined the need for a proper trial to evaluate the effectiveness of the experimental procedure.

of heart patients with the use of mechanical hearts. A further trial is expected to start soon in the United States.

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about group assist... She admits I walk into... with. Don't sleep with... er.

# Labour left group to resist Blair

Patrick Wintour, Chief Political Correspondent

**S**IGNS of rank-and-file unease with the direction of Tony Blair's leadership of the Labour Party emerged yesterday, when a new leftwing group of activists — Labour Reform — was established, designed to check centralisation.

The 100-strong group wants to stop the party being so reorganised that it does not have the constitutional power to resist a Blair-led government. The group was born out of the so-called Summer of Discontent last year, when many party activists, including Mr's like Richard Burgin, voiced concern at the alleged centralisation of power under Mr Blair.

**'Rightwing radicals are constructing a populist model in opposition to the party's traditions'**

The avowedly anti-metropolitan group, which includes many Labour councillors, claims the party and the leadership have been drifting apart, and that small groups of rightwing radicals are "constructing a populist plebiscitary model for the party in complete opposition to its traditions".

The group, bound to be dismissed by the leadership as unrepresentative, fear that Mr Blair is trying to build a mass-membership party and then seek endorsement for his changes through referendums of the membership.

In particular, they warn: "In the US, politics has become an affair run by professional politicians to benefit professional politicians. Ordinary people have been reduced to voting fodder."

Labour Reform is also bound to be dismissed as a weight to Progress, the young activists' network set up by young Blairite radicals, including Derek Draper, the former assistant to Peter Mandelson. Andy Howell, Labour Reform's chairman, is reportedly the son of the former Labour MP Denis Howell, said yesterday: "We have no policy agenda outside the de-

sire to see an active party, which is engaged in policy consultation with its own members and the political education of the electorate.

"We see ourselves as the best hope for unity between party and government in office and the best insurance against a Labour government being blown off course by the London-based establishment."

He said it was ironic that, despite information technology, the mass membership of the Labour party were consulted less and informed less about party policy.

The first four studies to be undertaken by Labour Reform are:

□ A review of the constitutional base of the National Policy Forum and methods of regeneration of constituency parties. They fear that local parties are becoming little more than social and fundraising organisations.

□ Reform of the National Executive Committee, to ensure that it remains responsive to the party membership in the country and supportive of a Labour government. The party leadership is already considering a radical restructuring of the NEC when Labour is in government.

□ Support for a positive role for local government in the party.

□ The creation of an open debate on constitutional reform within the party, in which Labour Reform will insist that the party must not drift into becoming a supporters' club, rather than a full participative party.

Leaders of Labour Reform insist they are not inspired by animosity towards Mr Blair, or drawn from either the extreme left or right of the party. The group accepts that Labour cannot go back to the era of cloth caps and smoke-filled rooms.

But they complain in the group's first newsletter that Labour is "becoming trapped in a sterile debate between traditionalists and modernisers. The options for the party are polarised between standing still or adopting the agenda of a London-based elite".

They claim many party members would prefer to avoid another bout of internal reform before the election. But they argue that the Blair leadership has no intention of slowing the pace, this creates a need for Labour Reform to influence change.

# Cliveden may be haunted by scandal, but its Stock Exchange flotation is put at £30m



William Winde's arched terrace of 1850 at Cliveden, with the Borghese balustrade which the first Viscount Astor bought in Rome in 1896

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ARGLES

# Cashing in on betrayal and bootleg sex

**Where Hitler's henchman was feted, and the war minister dallied with a call-girl**

**John Ezard on a stately manoeuvre**



Ghosts of Cliveden (from left): Oswald Moseley, John Profumo, Christine Keeler

**C**LIVEDEN, full of the notorious ghosts of the 1930s Cliveden Set and the 1960s Profumo scandal, is to be floated on the Stock Exchange for £30 million.

Announcing this yesterday, the company which now runs the stately home near Taplow, Buckinghamshire, as a luxury hotel boasted that its room rates of £245 a night were the highest in Britain.

Cliveden plc, which claimed the property was one of the world's three top hotels, said it would use the cash to develop a chain of

other luxury hotels. To boost the flotation, the company issued a 32-page glossy brochure which stresses Cliveden's four servants per room, 376 acres of grounds and swimming pool. But it only briefly mentions the Profumo scandal and omits the 1930s connection.

"There are so many ways of relaxing at Cliveden", the brochure says, in a claim which historians of the house would endorse. You could flirt with betraying your country, as did the Cliveden Set under the then owner, Lord Astor.

in its backstairs support for appeasing Hitler's conquest of Europe. Hitler's confidant and London ambassador, von Ribbentrop, was a favoured pre-war guest at Cliveden, as was the British

fascist leader Oswald Moseley. An historian of the Times, which was also involved in appeasement, has written: "The Cliveden Set carry a heavy responsibility in the long eye of his-

tory". Or, at Cliveden, you could relax by sleeping with a girl who was also sleeping with the Soviet naval attaché, as did Britain's then Minister for War, John Profumo, in July 1961.

Mr Profumo subsequently spent 30 years as a poverty fund-raiser rehabilitating himself after the scandal, which helped to bring down the Conservative government in 1964.

The girl, Christine Keeler, who was naked beside the pool when she met Profumo and Lord Astor, later wrote: "It was embarrassing to be formally introduced to ladies in tiaras and evening dresses". Or you could — as did Cliveden's 17th century founder, the Duke of Buckingham — use it to enter-

tain your mistress and fellow-visitors. "He had all the pleasures of the flesh and chase in mind", the brochure admits. Cliveden's 20th century dynast, the US millionaire landowner Waldorf Astor, started in the way he meant his successor to go on by building a colossal voluptuous fountain of love in front of the house.

For their huge expenditure, today's guests get another touch of nostalgia. In the men's loo, they can find portraits of Ms Keeler, her companion Mandy Rice-Davies, and nearby, for no clear reason, a picture of the Duke of Edinburgh. On a table beside these is a bottle of mouth wash, put there to symbolise Cliveden's place in the history of Britain.

# Spheres of influence

**Campaign Group**  
The Campaign Group of Socialist MPs is around 30 strong, but has an outside network and a monthly newspaper which can legitimately claim it has enough influence to help hard-left MPs such as Dennis Skinner and Diane Abbott win election to the National Executive Committee.

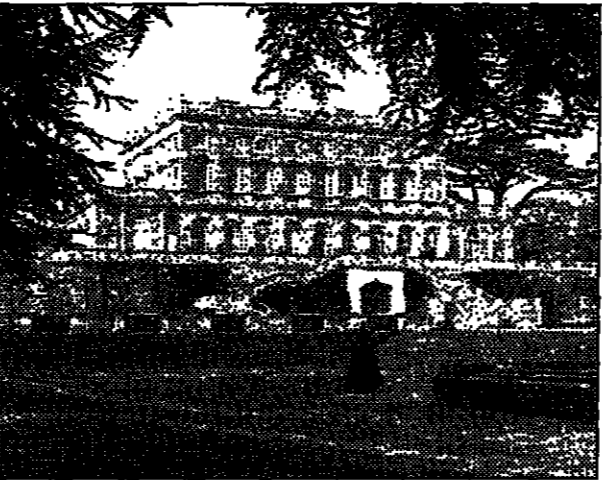
The role of Campaign Group MPs, including some of its brighter advocates such as Alan Simpson and Ken Livingstone, will increase in the event of Labour winning only a small majority at the next election.

**Labour Co-ordinating Committee**  
A supporter of Bennite democratic reforms in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the LCC transformed itself into a supportive if independent voice backing Neil Kinnock's reforms. Many of its leading figures are now professional lobbyists or researchers and it relies heavily on a quarterly journal, *Renewal*, for its present intellectual influence.

**Labour Briefing**  
Scurrilous, sometimes funny, very hard-left magazine supported by Liz Davies, the Labour candidate for Leeds North East banned from standing by the National Executive. The magazine has Trotskyist links, but insists that it is not an entryist organisation.

**Progress**  
Newly-formed magazine cum political education centre, designed to provide mainly young Blairites with the intellectual ammunition and information to make New Labour a reality on the ground. However, it insists that it has not been established as a factional group aimed at the winning of power for its supporters.

**Labour First**  
Union-oriented right-of-centre group with heavy reliance on the support of the electricians' union and of the engineers for its influence. Organises strenuously for NEC elections.



Cliveden... 'one of the world's top three hotels'

# Robin Hood on run from PR men

Martin Wainwright

**T**HE Sheriff of Nottingham is riding to the rescue of his old antagonist Robin Hood, after an attempt by business and PR executives to dump the man who gave taxation a warm and friendly image.

Companies and export specialists in the Midlands city are hoping to oust the green-jerked bowman as their civic symbol, on the grounds that he gives the wrong impression to potential, money-minded investors.

ship — comprising businesses, the city's two universities and the local council — has decided that Robin is "soft imaging" and a PR lightweight, for all the havoc attributed to his stave and longbow.

"We have to find a way of promoting what we have to offer, to attract wealth-generating activity in competition with all the other UK and European regions," said Alastair Eperon, director of corporate affairs at Boots, the city's biggest firm.

He added: "Nottingham has on offer a lot of very good things, but none of them has

much to do with Robin Hood — that is the problem."

Bob White, the city council's director of corporate affairs, said that Robin was a difficult symbol to adapt to 21st century Europe.

The partnership, which is backing its claim with research and surveys, hopes for a new symbol by August. The delay is offering time for a fightback, led by the current Sheriff of Nottingham, Roy Greensmith.

He said yesterday: "The legend of Robin Hood is of a person with a soul and a civic conscience, a man who robbed the rich to give to the

poor. That is rather out of fashion these days. But can we really afford to give him up? I don't think so — not just for tourism but for business."

The move also brought an immediate bid for Robin from Pontefract, where the author Brian Lewis has fought a long campaign to restore the outlaw to his more likely stamping ground of South Yorkshire. "At last, Nottingham has given up its long fantasy," he said. "We look forward to welcoming Robin back to where he really belongs."

Leader comment, page 8

**She admits she is attracted to feminine men and masculine women. "The type of girl I fancy when I walk into a room is not the type of girl I sleep with. Isn't that weird? I'm a lazy thing and I usually sleep with people who approach me."**

**Kathy Acker G2 page 12**

# Bill

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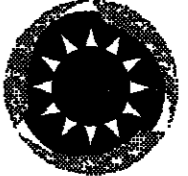
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Schools, shoppers and restaurants spurn suspect meat as job worries mount and Government ignores safety demands

'Buy non-British' stamped grows

Owen Bowcott and Vivek Chaudhary

THE stamped to drop British beef from school, retail and restaurant menus accelerated yesterday as the Government sidestepped mounting public calls for specific guidelines on food safety.

Wimpies believes it must change to non-British beef to maintain absolute confidence in the safety of its products. Likewise Wendy, following McDonald's at the weekend, promised: "From today all beef in our restaurants in the UK will be non-British beef, and all British beef will be removed from our system."

For schools, Mr Dorrell's decision not to issue fresh regulations left the choice up to individual education authorities. Estimates suggest a third of them have already taken beef off the menu.

But Ian Langtry, of the Association of County Councils, disagreed. "Beeburgers and sausages are already off the menus in most schools. Most too give a range of options which include a vegetarian meal. I am not surprised the Government has concluded there is no need to offer generalised advice."

meat market said the price of imported beef had rocketed 25 per cent as sales of home-grown beef ground to a virtual halt. "People aren't buying beef for love or money," one meat-cutter said.

Michael Chapman, head of Guttridge and Co meat wholesalers, added: "We just can't sell British beef at the moment. It's come to an almost complete standstill. It's worse than we expected."

£1.5bn widening in trade gap feared as imports replace exports

Larry Elliott Economics Editor

THE CITY was last night predicting an increase of up to £1.5 billion a year in the trade gap following Europe's ban on beef exports.

doubts about the Chancellor's ability to deliver big pre-election tax cuts even before last week's revelations about BSE.

Killing every head of cattle would also magnify the impact of last night's ban, since it would mean importing vast quantities of dairy products.

Milk shortages would lead to sharply higher prices - which would hit inflation

The most obvious impact would be on the public finances, where the cost of compensating farmers alone would be £10 billion, according to Ian Shepherdson, economist with City firm HSBC.

The Government is hoping that Brussels will use the Common Agricultural Policy to provide an alternative market for unwanted British beef to limit the impact on state finances.

The Government will still probably have to foot the bill for subsidies to help farmers rebuild their businesses and for the long-term costs of unemployment in the food processing and dairy industries.

Mr Shepherdson said that the total costs could add up to a maximum of £20 billion on the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement, perhaps spread over a number of years.

Some of the money would come from a raid on the Treasury's contingency reserve, but according to Adam Cole, economist with James Capel, government borrowing would inevitably rise as well.

The RPI-X in the current financial year already looks set to exceed £30 billion, and the City was already having

Child clue to killer strain

Paul Brown Environment Correspondent

SOME of the victims of the new strain of fatal brain disorder which may be a human version of 'mad cow disease' were under 10 when they were infected, John Pattison, chairman of the government's expert panel said yesterday.



A truck containing carcasses of cows, slaughtered after one of the herd was diagnosed with BSE, leaving a farm in Pommerville-Vicomte, western France, yesterday. The carcasses of 151 cows are due to be burned today. Five days ago, France banned British beef imports because of BSE. PHOTOGRAPH: PHILIPPE HUGUES

might be particularly at risk. The normal form of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease generally affected people over 50. The two-day meeting considered whether the proteins associated with causing the disease were more likely to be absorbed by or affect children more than adults.

He was not so sure about beef. Since muscle contained the same protein, it was a possible route but no evidence for it had been found either. If it was transmitted through beef then it was probably through splashing of offal on to complete slaughtering process.

Asked about whether milk and dairy products were safe, Professor Pattison said there was no evidence that they could be a route of infection. He was not so sure about beef. Since muscle contained the same protein, it was a possible route but no evidence for it had been found either.

mission through beef then it was probably through splashing of offal on to complete slaughtering process. The committee also wanted the Government to ensure that fertilizer derived from animal blood and offal should not be put on fields where animals would graze.

Advisers confirm that CJD cases linked to BSE before offal ban

THE following is the statement from the Government's Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee:

Introduction The committee has reported 10 cases of a previously unrecognised variant of CJD [Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease]. It agreed this weekend, after further discussion and consideration of additional genetic data from some of these patients, that our conclusions of March 20, 1996 are unchanged.

Risk assessment The committee has considered whether a quantitative risk assessment can provide an estimate of the absolute risk in relation to BSE. In its judgment a precise measure is impossible because of a number of interacting uncertainties, including:

Age-related susceptibility SEAC had a wide ranging discussion of the changes in the physiology of the human gastro-intestinal tract and host defences throughout life. It considered carefully its knowledge of the transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (kuru, CJD, scrapie, transmissible mink encephalopathy; BSE) in natural infections and animal model systems.

Other vulnerable groups The committee also considered the following groups: the immunosuppressed, patients in hospital and pregnant women. It concludes that if human infection with the BSE agent occurs, none of these groups is likely to have any increased susceptibility to infection.

Public, the younger generation, and parental concerns No human activity is without some risk; if the Government rigorously enforces the current and newly recommended controls, we believe this risk is likely to be extremely small; however the committee recognises that parents will often choose to reduce risk to their children beyond that which they are prepared to accept for themselves.

Conclusions The committee therefore advises the Government: a) to ensure that all the restrictions previously recommended are fully implemented. If this is ensured, any BSE-related risk from eating any beef or beef products is likely to be extremely small.

land to which ruminants have access. b) to reinforce immediately the surveillance of CJD and associated epidemiological research; c) that these issues will require long-term, basic and applied research [which] will require substantial additional resources.

FACT: an estimated 2.3 Million UK adult males are impotent. Male Impotence: A Simple and Easy Solution. The facts speak for themselves: almost anyone can become impotent, at any age and for any reason, including stress, anxiety, tiredness, depression, alcoholism, diabetes, serious and even minor illnesses. And there are many forms of impotence, from the lack of erection to premature ejaculation.

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Stephen Bates on EU scientists' vote to ban all tainted products indefinitely. BRITAIN found itself isolated within the European Union over beef last night, friendless and with no immediate promise of cash aid to bail it out of the worst crisis in British agriculture since the second world war.

UK isolated, friendless and without offer of aid. The driving force behind its adoption. Last night it was clear the commission used to years of slights and insults from the British for its bureaucracy and its allegedly overweening powers - was in no mood to accept any compromises or half measures and was not prepared to offer aid.

FREE The Complete Answer To Male Impotence! has been published by The London Diagnostic Centre to show you how easy it is to attain confidence, please complete the coupon today. Tel: 0161 226 0931

It would be interesting to ask Mrs Major if she hears any terrified three-in-the-morning screams coming from beside her. If the Conservatives did go down to two seats, Mr Major, in Huntingdon, would probably hold one of the two, perhaps along with Sir Norman Fowler in Sutton Coldfield, but neither of them might find the Commons much fun in those circumstances.

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With prices in freefall, one cattle farmer struggles to come to terms with the financial implications of the disease

# Farm's stock of gloom and shock

Geoffrey Gibbs on cost to rural life

NOTHING in the Government's statement yesterday could lighten the mood of gloom that has fallen on the Barter household since the latest BSE scare sent market prices of beef into a freefall.

Sitting in the warm, spacious kitchen of his 200-year-old hillside farmhouse in the Teign Valley, Ron Barter listened intently but with deepening frustration to the announcements and to the political point-scoring that followed.

"There's nothing in that that gives me a warm feeling," he said slowly. "I'm still feeling depressed. I don't think it's going to make any difference to us or to the confidence of the public."

Ron and his wife, Beverley, have good cause to be moan the financial implications of the collapse in confidence, which has come at the worst of all times in the annual farming cycle, with cattle ready for market and new calves about to be born.

Over the past nine years they have built up a herd of South Devon, Hereford cross, and Limousin cross cattle at Lowley farm near Christow, Devon, eschewing animal protein or bone-



Ron Barter, contemplating an uncertain future and possible financial ruin, with beef cattle at his West Country farm

PHOTOGRAPH: TIM CUFF

meal feeds but suffering four incidents of BSE from heifers they had bought in for breeding.

They were doing sufficiently well to be able to buy a neighbouring property with the help of a supportive bank manager. But with prices plunging and no obvious buyers for their product they now find themselves financially

stretched. Under other circumstances, about 85 of their 250-strong herd would have been taken to market during the spring and summer sales. With prices crashing by about 20 per cent as news of the possible CJD link broke they were looking at a loss of up to £20,000 on any sale.

"We were in severe shock initially," said Ron. "There was a feeling of disbelief, of catastrophe and depression. The financial implications of this could be devastating... We would normally employ one full-time and one part-time worker through the year, but at harvest time we take on about six people for a couple of months for silage and hay-making."

"Then there's the fencing and hedging and the arable work that has to be done. The worst scenario is that we won't be able to carry on." Bel-tightening has already begun.

The Barter's would normally be ordering bulk supplies of fertiliser for hay and silage by now, but a £5,000 order has been delayed. They have also cut

down the amount of feed being given to animals to slow down the fattening process.

The biggest worry though is whether they will find the energy to cope with the spring calving season. "For calving you are on a 24-hour day. But it's difficult to motivate yourself when you just don't know what is going to happen."

# Slaughter would take five years

Christopher Elliott and Stuart Millar report

OWNERS of the few incinerators in Britain designed to destroy suspected BSE cattle carcasses will on Friday present ministers with a blueprint for dealing with a policy of wholesale slaughter.

However, such a move is fraught with logistical and environmental problems, as there are fewer than 20 specialists and their total capacity is only 1,000 carcasses a day. They will, though, thrash out a plan at a meeting of the Licensed Animal Slaughterers and Salvage Association on Thursday.

Options being considered by the Government range from killing the entire British herd of 11 million cattle, to a selective cull of hundreds of thousands of animals. Any of these options would strain a system that dealt with only 454 BSE cases in the first 10 weeks of this year — and even when the BSE scare was at its height in 1993, it only had to destroy around 1,000 carcasses a week.

"We do see there is a major problem with how we do this," Chris Ashworth, the association's technical adviser, said yesterday.

The incinerators are licensed either by the local authorities or by the Inspectorate of Pollution. At present, when a cow is suspected of BSE a Ministry of Agriculture vet is called to kill it with a lethal injection. The head is then removed for tests to confirm BSE, and the carcass is taken to an incinerator by specialist transport.

If the so-called "doomsday option" of slaughtering the entire national herd were chosen — costing £7 billion in compensation, or £20 billion if the Government pays restitution for loss of earnings while herds are rebuilt — it could hardly be done in less than five years.

Douglas Hogg, the Minister of Agriculture, hinted at the weekend that the Government favoured slaughtering all cattle born more than 30 months ago, as there had been no BSE cases in beasts born since then. Compensation would be £3.2 billion for the

4.5 million animals involved, and up to £10 billion for lost earnings.

Another option, which appears to find some favour in the industry, is to destroy dairy cows at the end of their productive lives. Most BSE is in dairy cows, but so far it is accepted their milk is safe and so killing them at about seven years of age would enable a phased slaughter policy of only 1,000 carcasses a day. They will, though, thrash out a plan at a meeting of the Licensed Animal Slaughterers and Salvage Association on Thursday.

Whatever the levels of compensation, the effects on the jobs of the 300,000 or so employed in the beef and dairy industry are unclear.

Norman Coward, agriculture director of the Midland Bank, said the impact of compensation would be particularly important for dairy farmers. "It very much depends on the nature of the business. If we are talking about dairy cows then the compensation for the animal wouldn't be sufficient as there's a large consequential loss of milk revenue."

"The issue of consequential loss is going to be very important. If the Government opts for culling cows so they are destroyed instead of going into the food chain as cheap meat, then there's no loss to the farmer because the animal was at the end of its working life. But as soon as we start talking about slaughtering a milking cow then there will be quite a substantial consequential loss when it leaves the herd, so there may be a danger of some dairy farmers going to the wall."

Ewen Cameron, president of the Country Landowners Association, said yesterday: "I have heard a figure of 50 per cent of people could go in the dairy industry, but downstream of that it may be more like a total of 130,000."

But many farmers' biggest bill may not be in cash. "The greatest loss is of a breeding programme — it's a lifetime's work just gone," an industry spokesman said yesterday.

# US warned of imminent mad cow disease threat

Alex Bellon and Michael White

THE US faces a similar crisis to that of mad cow disease in 10 years time, a leading US environmentalist warned yesterday.

Howard Lyman, of the US Humane Society, said that a mysterious condition, Downer Cow Syndrome (DCS), which kills 100,000 cattle in the US every year, has been linked to an encephalopathy disease.

Mr Lyman, a Montana cattle rancher turned environmental lobbyist, was in London yesterday to prepare for his appearance today as a defence witness in the "McLibel" High Court case where McDonald's is suing two campaigners over a leaflet.

He said that scientists in Wisconsin have recently established links between DCS and a fatal BSE-like disease.

## UK 161,663, the rest 383

OFFICIAL figures show the UK has logged 422 times more cases of BSE than the rest of the world. Guernsey and the Isle of Man each have more cases than the rest of the world.

Britain, 158,882; Northern Ireland, 1,680; Guernsey, 578; Isle of Man, 408; Jersey, 119; Alderney, 2; UK total: 161,663. Rest of the world: Swit-

zerland, 205; Republic of Ireland, 123; Portugal, 31; France, 13; Germany, 4; Italy, 2; Oman, 2; Canada, 1; Denmark, 1; Falklands, 1; Total: 383. All the cases recorded in Germany, Italy, Oman, Canada, Denmark and the Falklands are said to have originated in Britain as were three of the Portuguese cases.

The report said: "It would however be premature to conclude that this indicates any additional risk factor for CJD in the UK as the incidence in other countries without BSE is similar or even higher."

British CJD deaths rose from 28 in 1985 to 35 in 1994 — dropping at the start of last year — and reached a peak of 0.93 cases per million people a

year. In France the comparable figure for 1993-94 was 0.81 per million, in Germany 0.68 in 1993/94, Israel 0.91 over the longer period, 1983-87, Holland 0.92 in 1993/94, and 0.83 in the US in 1986-88.

Dairy farmers appear at greater risk of CJD regardless of whether their country is BSE free, suggesting that "other aspects of dairy farming" may be the cause. The

Commons library paper issued in November suggests that through most of the world "the distribution of CJD is apparently random."

A herd of 151 cattle was slaughtered yesterday in Britain because a cow had BSE and a second herd will be slaughtered soon. Every time a case has been found in France, the herd has been slaughtered and incinerated.

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**News in brief**

**Takeaway for Germans**  
THE German football team may bring home-produced beef to England during June's European Football Championships.

The team cook, Fritz Westermann, said he had been asked to contact a Bavarian butcher who could guarantee the quality of his meat and had helped the national team in the past.

**SA may lift ban**  
SOUTH Africa is sending experts to the UK to establish whether it is safe to lift its temporary ban. The chief director of the department of agriculture, Paul Bosman, said that there were no scientific grounds for the ban, which had only been introduced as a "public relations exercise".

South Africa imports about 27,000 tonnes of British beef a year.

**Smuggling alert**  
FRENCH customs officials were on alert yesterday after four lorries were intercepted trying to smuggle banned British beef into Calais. In one consignment officials discovered 140 carcasses — 15 tonnes — without the obligatory country-of-origin stamp. This was followed by three more lorries carrying a further 32 tonnes.

**Help from the US**  
THE US agriculture secretary, Dan Glickman, promised technical assistance to Britain. "We're going to provide them all the help and assistance we can in figuring out what causes BSE and how to stop it."

**Egyptian caution**  
TWO ships carrying about 3,600 Irish cattle have left Egyptian waters on orders from the authorities. Egypt has imposed a ban on imports of European meat and livestock.

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Chance to opt out may appeal to Eurosceptics
EU warns Britain not to block unity

John Palmer

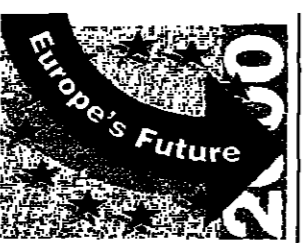
A POWERFUL coalition of governments - led by Chancellor Helmut Kohl and President Jacques Chirac - will warn John Major this week not to derail plans for closer European unity or risk being excluded from a final agreement.

table with parallel steps to strengthen political unity. Meanwhile Mr Chirac yesterday confidently restated France's determination to join, on time, the single currency bloc.

veto any aspect of the proposed overhaul of the Maastricht treaty, including greater majority voting or an eventual defence union.

Wooded Chirac articulates rising passion for Europe

France's leader has thrust social policy back on to the agenda of this week's Maastricht review conference, writes Alex Duval Smith in Paris in the second of a series on views from EU states



BY DIVERTING the European agenda towards social issues, President Jacques Chirac yesterday put paid to any lingering British hopes that the arrival of a tricolore-waving Gaullist at the Elysee Palace would dampen France's Euro-ambition.

Only public opinion has its doubts: the latest opinion poll, published last Friday, found that 49 per cent of French people consider European countries to be a net benefit to the French economy.

France's president wants to 'define a genuine European social project'

Mr Chirac implied in an article in Liberation that Britain's bete noire, the Maastricht social chapter, did not go far enough and was too often flouted. He wants to "define a genuine European social project", and will shortly circulate his proposals to member states.

Mr Chirac said yesterday: "The community has a budget of 600 million francs (92.5 million) - a marvellous instrument for job creation." He said it was unacceptable that job-creation schemes agreed at EU summits in 1994 and 1995, including 14 transport projects, were still dormant.

Berlusconi claims rivals are 'dinosaurs' as Italy shuts up shop to protest at high taxes

John Hooper in Rome

SHOPS and bars across Italy closed their shutters for two hours yesterday to protest against the tax burden carried by small businesses. Tax has become a key issue in the general election campaign and was the central theme yesterday of the first televised debate between the two main contenders for the premiership, allowing Silvio Berlusconi, leader of the right, to coin the campaign's first memorable slogan.

Several prominent figures from the past, including a former Christian Democrat prime minister, Ciriaco De Mita, have been put up as candidates of the centre-left's "Olive Tree alliance".



Red-carpet treatment... King Harald of Norway looks on as President Yeltsin blows a kiss to the crowds on his arrival in Oslo yesterday. Russian opposition to Nato expansion and Norway's concerns about nuclear pollution will top the agenda for talks during his visit

Yeltsin rules out merger with Belarus

David Hearst in Moscow and John Palmer in Brussels

BORIS Yeltsin was forced to backpedal furiously yesterday on his plans to seek the reintegration of former Soviet states with Russia. The Russian president denied that a union treaty with Belarus, to be signed on April 2, would mean the merger of the two countries.

The central Asian states are not prepared to sign an agreement giving powers to a supra-national supreme council composed of presidents, prime ministers and parliamentary Speakers.

from his project to gain the votes of moderate Russian nationalists who deplore his role in breaking up the Soviet Union in 1991. The other two signatories of the secret agreement which heralded the collapse of the union, Leonid Kravchuk and Stanislav Shushkevich - the then leaders of Ukraine and Belarus

Mikhail Gorbachev, the then Soviet president, instead. Mr Yeltsin has never forgiven Mr Nazarbayev for what he sees as an act of betrayal, and now views him as a potential ally of the communist leader, Genady Zyuganov.

states, the Duma declined to continue the squabble. Mr Zyuganov is favourite to win the June presidential elections. The support of the extreme left will boost his 23 per cent share of the vote by six to seven points - at the expense of the "third force" of moderates, whom Mr Yeltsin has been wooing.

'Russia was, is and will be Belarus's main foreign partner. Contacts with Europe will be co-ordinated with Russia'

parliament, is ready to sign up. On Saturday he spoke in enthusiastic terms of composing a national anthem for the new state. He said the union agreement must be signed in a public square or "in a solemn ceremony in a palace" before the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, Alexei II.

— have both been ousted. Mr Yeltsin has struggled to disown his role in the meeting. Nursultan Nazarbayev, the president of Kazakhstan, is in no hurry to ball Mr Yeltsin into a public square or "in a solemn ceremony in a palace" before the Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, Alexei II.

forced to seek new partners for a leftwing alliance. He has found them on the extreme left, an alliance which led to his party signing two largely symbolic Duma resolutions to restore the status quo ante of the Soviet Union. When challenged by Mr Yeltsin to say whether the resolutions invalidated Russia's recognition of the newly independent

World news in brief



First Lady in Bosnia... Hillary Clinton greets US peacekeepers on her arrival at Tuzla airbase yesterday, during her one-day visit to the troops in Bosnia. Accompanied by her daughter Chelsea, she flew in on a cargo plane loaded with presents, and became the first US president's wife to visit independently an area of conflict

Queen pays tribute to Polish Jews

THE Queen laid a wreath yesterday at Umschlagplatz, just outside what was the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw, as she began the first visit by a British monarch to Poland, writes Sanchia Berg in Warsaw.

Arms trade ethics call

A judicial inquiry has recommended an end to all secrecy surrounding South African arms sales as part of a new weapons policy subordinating economic advantage to ethical considerations, writes David Berezford in Johannesburg.

Nuclear-free zone

Britain, France and the United States yesterday signed the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty in Suva, Fiji, agreeing to ban nuclear weapons from the region, home to about 26 million people. — Reuters.

Queen pays tribute to Polish Jews

Arms trade ethics call

Nuclear-free zone

WHO says sanctions have devastated Iraq health care

THE World Health Organisation said yesterday that five years of sanctions have set back health care in Iraq by 50 years and the international community should reconsider the implications of the financial and trade embargo.

and the death rate for children under five is at least six times higher. "Assessment reports rightly remarked that the quality of health care in Iraq, due to the six-week 1991 war, has rebounded since 1991 to epidemic levels, with the health sector as a helpless witness," it added. — Reuters.

Pope denies cancer report

THE Vatican yesterday denied a Spanish newspaper report that the Pope has cancer. The pontiff, aged 75, would go ahead with a heavy schedule of engagements in the next few weeks.

'Gallic Elvis' Hallyday weds

The French rock singer, Johnny Hallyday, aged 52, married model Laetitia Beaudou, aged 21, yesterday. It was his fifth wedding and her first.

Diplomat expelled

Jordan has expelled Hussein Faraj Khalaf, the assistant press attaché at the Iraqi embassy in Amman, for activities incompatible with his diplomatic status, an official source said yesterday. — Reuters.

Giscard resigns

France's right faces its biggest shake-up for 20 years after the resignation last night of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing as leader of the Union for French Democracy (UDF), writes Alex Duval Smith in Paris.

Muskie critical

The former US secretary of state, Edmund Muskie, is in a critical condition after suffering a heart attack, his law firm said yesterday. Mr Muskie, aged 91, a former presidential candidate, suffered the attack during an operation in Washington. — Reuters.

Murdoch in China

Rupert Murdoch's Star TV network yesterday announced a new three-channel satellite-delivered service in the Chinese language of Mandarin. — Reuters.

Samper defiant

Colombia's president, Ernesto Samper, has rejected any notion of resigning despite having proposed early elections to help the country overcome a

The underlying theme is a simple one, that of secrecy versus openness. The Government's protests seem disingenuous Richard Norton-Taylor

Law G2 page 7

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including 'American Group W...', 'No a...', 'Ever', and 'COPIED'.

# American blacks step up war on 'terrorist' Nigeria

Jonathan Freedland in Washington

CASTING Nigeria as the South Africa of the 1990s, a high-profile coalition of black Americans has launched an all-out campaign against the military dictatorship of General Sani Abacha — the community's first such attack on a black African government.

In a move hailed as a political coming of age for black America, veterans of the battle against apartheid will this week step up their war on the "terrorist government" of Nigeria.

The former presidential candidate Jesse Jackson, writers Maya Angelou and Alice Walker, musician Quincy Jones, and actors Bill Cosby and Danny Glover have joined TransAfrica — the movement which led the United States struggle against apartheid in South Africa — in urging the Clinton administration to punish the Nigerian regime.

Several black congressmen have proposed a raft of US sanctions against Nigeria, accusing Gen Abacha's regime of conducting a reign of terror, corruption and environmental degradation.

The Nigeria Democracy bill — tabled after last November's execution of playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa — seeks an end to all US aid to the country, a ban on flights be-

twixt the US and Nigeria, and an eventual oil embargo. Campaigners also want South Africa-style break in all sporting links with Nigeria, with the US possibly denying visas to the Nigerian team in this summer's Olympic Games in Atlanta.

The Clinton administration will shortly announce its own action against the Abacha regime. It has already suspended financial credit, restricted admission to the US to Nigerians linked to the dictatorship and announced a ban on defence sales. Activists expect stiffer sanctions soon. "It won't be an oil em-

bargo, but it will be something with quantifiable bite," TransAfrica president Randall Robinson said yesterday.

Campaigners are still pushing President Clinton on the fuel ban, arguing that since the US buys nearly half of Nigeria's oil this would be the quickest way to hurt the country's military rulers — who are accused of siphoning off oil profits into their own

overseas bank accounts. Mr Robinson, the father of the US anti-apartheid movement, fears that opposition from some of Washington's allies, including Britain, may be holding Mr Clinton back.

Clinton has always been a problem, he said. "They weren't leaders against apartheid, and I don't expect them to be leaders in this case."

For black Americans, the new Nigeria campaign represents a dramatic shift from the previous policy of a united front with black Africa — whatever its shortcomings.

"It's certainly not comfortable to be publicly self-critical in this way," Mr Robinson admitted. "But you do our community no service with silence in the face of this kind of tyranny. Does it indicate a political maturation? Probably."

'Britain wasn't a leader against apartheid, and it won't be one now'



Flames of protest... Kashmiri demonstrators burn tyres in Srinagar yesterday, to protest against the police siege around the holy Muslim shrine of Hazrat Bal PHOTOGRAPH: AMAZ RAH

# India sets limit on protest

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi

FEARFUL that they are on the brink of a long siege that could wreck plans to hold elections in the Kashmir valley, India tried both threats and diplomacy yesterday to persuade separatist militants holed up inside Kashmir's holiest shrine to leave.

The stand-off between security forces and militants at Srinagar's Hazrat Bal, a white marble shrine which believers say contains a hair from the beard of the Prophet Mohammed, began on Sunday, when at least 10 people, including a policeman, were killed in a gunbattle.

Indian negotiators tried to convince more than two dozen militants to leave the shrine, fearing a repeat of the 32-day siege of the mosque in 1993. But the talks broke down when the imam and trustees of the mosque refused to participate.

As a protest strike took hold in the capital, Indian negotiators gave the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) militants 10 minutes to leave the mosque. The authorities then retreated with a promise to resume talks early today.

The government of the state of Jammu and Kashmir later released a statement saying anyone "attempting to misuse or desecrating any religious place" after Wednesday "will not be shown any leniency".

The statement, which officials said was aimed at the separatists in Hazrat Bal, called on all militants to surrender by tomorrow, and to turn over arms.

"After this date any person indulging in militant activities, harbouring militants or possessing unauthorised weapons will be dealt [with] severely under law," it said.

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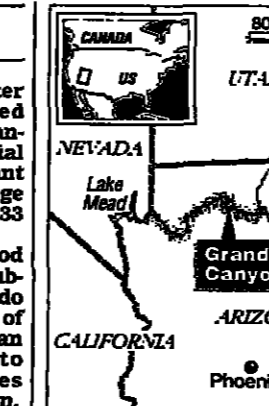
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# Big flush to clean Grand Canyon

Martin Walker in Washington

A GREAT wall of water will be unleashed down the Grand Canyon today, in an artificial spring flood that is meant to repair ecological damage caused by dams built 53 years ago.



White water rafters stood ready to launch their rubber boats on the Colorado river, to take advantage of the flood that will take an estimated 30 hours to travel the 292 miles through the Grand Canyon.

For two weeks, 30 billion gallons a day will be poured through the narrow, winding canyon, one of the world's natural wonders.

The water will raise the river level by 6ft in the canyon, and still be 2ft higher than usual when it reaches the Pacific Ocean.

# Britain attacks China for plan to scrap Hong Kong's assembly

Ian Black Diplomatic Editor

BRITAIN yesterday warned China that there was "no justification" for its plans to dismantle Hong Kong's elected parliament when it takes over the colony in 1997.

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, said China must show that the people of Hong Kong will be ruling the territory, as promised in the Anglo-Chinese joint declaration of 1984, which paved the way for the transfer of power.

Britain's ambassador to China, Sir Leonard Appleby, also expressed concern to Beijing after the talks between the Prime Minister John Major and China's prime minister, Li Peng, in Bangkok earlier this month.

China has made it clear that there will be little room for direct elections or dissent, and that it plans to disband Hong Kong's Legislative Council and replace it with a new "provisional legislature".

Statements upbraiding the Chinese are made by Britain in the knowledge that they will have little effect, but to assuage concerns in Hong Kong and to remind Beijing that events after 1997 will be closely followed.

# Britain attacks China for plan to scrap Hong Kong's assembly

# Okinawa governor faces showdown on US bases

Kevin Rafferty in Tokyo

A SHOWDOWN is looming between the Japanese government and the local authorities on the southern island of Okinawa after the high court ordered the island's governor yesterday to sign the renewal of land leases for United States bases.

If, as seems likely, Masahide Ota refuses, Ryutaro Hashimoto, the prime minister, will sign them.

It was the second blow for opponents of the bases which dominate the tiny island — 60 per cent of the 46,000 US troops based in Japan are in Okinawa. Mr Hashimoto said at the weekend that he would not move the bases to the mainland because of new security tensions in Asia.

Government officials said Mr Ota's objections were counter to national interests.

Mr Ota has refused to sign the lease renewals, claiming to do so would infringe landowners' property rights and be unconstitutional.

The branch of the Fukuoka high court in Okinawa's capital, Naha, said he had no authority to make a judgment on whether appropriation of land was constitutional.

Hiding behind experts

Tory populism has gone just when they need it

THIS IS bizarre, going on revolutionary. In almost every other field of policy... law and order, education, economics, to name but three — modern Conservatives have got where they are by hating the experts.

suspected herds. As a way of reclaiming the initiative this is extraordinarily brave — or extraordinarily stupid. It is not as though this was the only policy open to the Government, even on the basis of the experts' conclusions.

Water: the vanishing resource

40 per cent of the world suffers water stress: worse is to come

WORLD WATER day passed the global village by last Friday with barely a flicker of interest. A UN conference in Beijing was warned that we are silently but surely heading towards "water shock", which will dwarf any oil crisis we have known.

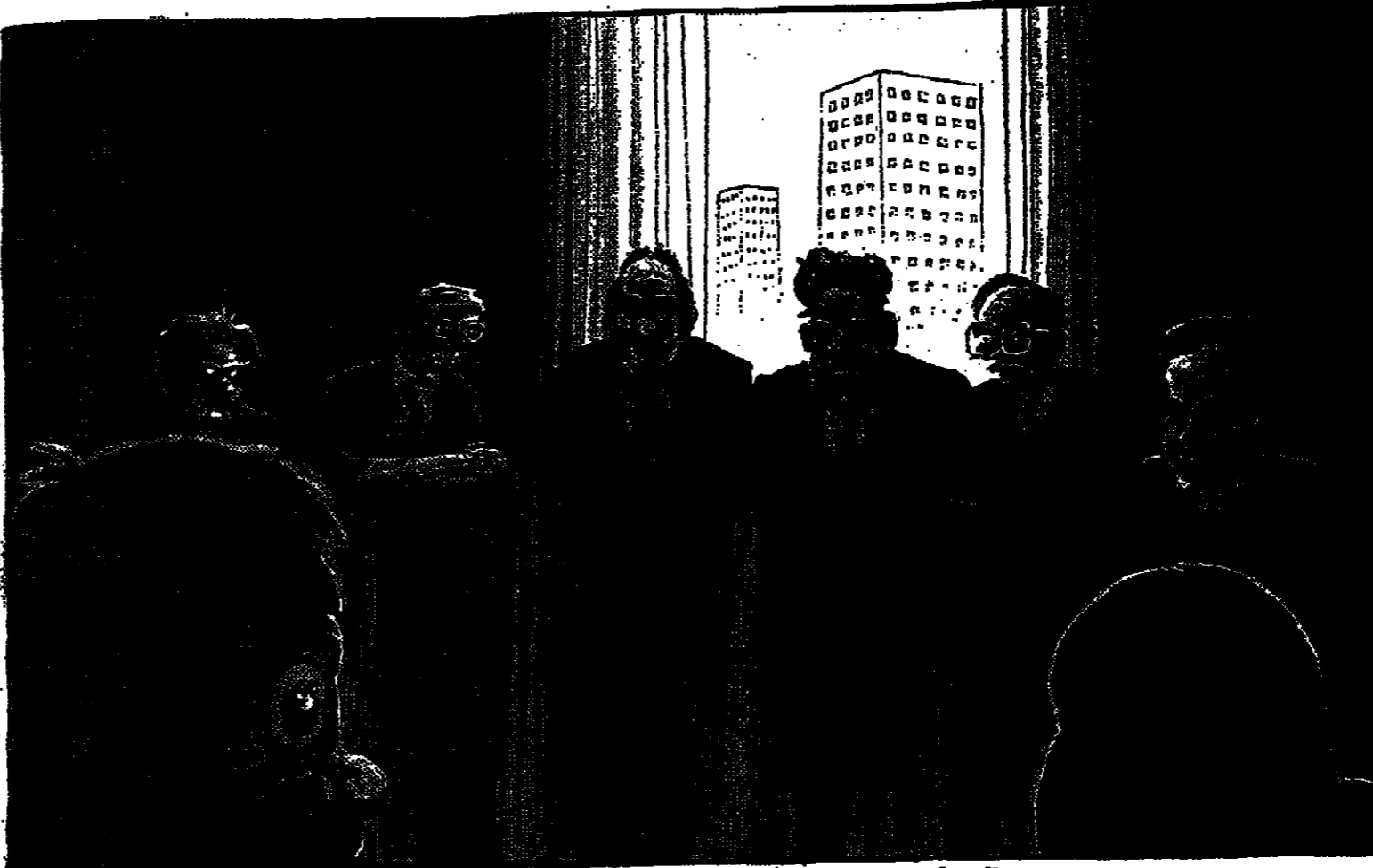
global warming is likely to generate more such cases as distribution patterns are altered by climatic change. The real problem is consumption rather than supply. Crop irrigation consumes 90 per cent of all water used in poor countries, according to last year's World Bank report.

Sherwood Forest's stakeholder

Nottingham cools on Robin Hood when his ideas are ripening

COUNTIES, like corporations, need strong brand images to attract tourists and industry. Nottinghamshire is lucky in being endowed with a ready-made image which it has fully exploited.

has to offer." (Whether "Boots" stands for the things Boots has to offer is another moot point). Similarly it would be pointless to promote Nottingham's most famous modern son, Kenneth Clarke because Clarke might suggest shoes and that would be even more confusing for Boots.



"THEY'RE ONLY GOING TO VOTE LABOUR, SO LET 'EM DIE" - © Steve Bell 1996

Letters to the Editor

Hard facts for farmers to digest

Adopting a more open policy

I MADE a film about BSE nearly seven years ago which showed ovine spongiform encephalitis being rendered into cattle cake. We posed many questions about the risks of the sheep disease scrapie being transmitted into BSE, and of BSE similarly crossing a species barrier — from cows to humans.

FARMERS who knowingly fed their herbivore cattle with feed from the remains of other animals, so as to increase their profits above 30 per cent a year, should not be compensated by the tax-paying consumer.

rejected as fundamentally wrong. Cyril Eyre, Mutton's Cottage, St Mabyn, Bodmin, Cornwall.

IN 1990 I wrote an article published in Farmers Weekly, and reprinted in May 1990 by the Guardian, in which I predicted the chaos that has occurred this month if the Government refused to take precautionary action.

WE WELCOME the fact that Tony May (Letters, March 25) has drawn attention to the complex issues affecting people who seek information from adoption and in-care files. The Greater London Record Office has been concerned for some time to improve access to such records, and at the same time to protect the privacy of third parties.

Water: the vanishing resource

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The gold cup

THE forecast that only one in nine marriages is likely to survive for 50 years (March 20) made me wonder what proportion of those who got up in 1945, as my husband and I did, have made 50.

I WAS saddened to see you giving a platform to the anti-raptor lobby (A Country Diary, March 25). The stories quoted emanate from game interests disappointed that, under current legislation, they cannot kill birds of prey.

JOAN Smith's acute piece about the Orange Prize for women's fiction (And the winner is... a woman, March 25) still misses the scheme's greatest fault. Ghettoism doesn't matter — gender is no better or worse than the Commonwealth qualification for the Booker or the age qualification for the John Llewellyn Jones Award.

Sour Orange

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A Country Diary

SOMERSET: It is not only nowadays that the funding of rural education puts a burden on parents. A letter of 1889 to the Horington village schoolmaster survives: "Sir, I hear you intend punishing my boy for not bringing a copy book. I give you to understand it is not in my power to buy copy books."

A tale hawked by predators

I WAS saddened to see you giving a platform to the anti-raptor lobby (A Country Diary, March 25). The stories quoted emanate from game interests disappointed that, under current legislation, they cannot kill birds of prey.

SINCE the sparrowhawk's diet is based on birds, it is their population which is regulated by their prey and not vice versa. For generations they have evolved, with their prey species, to form part of a rich, mixed avifauna.

When my partner set down to start writing a first novel, the time had to be clocked out of her non-office life, leaving me alone with the children for weekends and evenings.

Circles and squares, approached from the left

ACCORDING to Martin Kettle (Shadows of doubt behind Blair, March 23), Tony Blair "needs reinforcements", as few of the current shadow cabinet "impress as heavy-weight potential ministers".

PLP who have been passed over in favour of clones of the Labour leadership. So the constituencies Kettle describes would be obliged to field yet more clones.

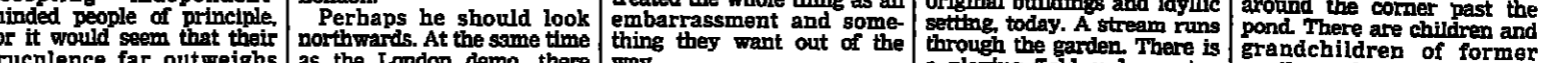
FOUR weeks ago more than 15,000 people trod the same paths from the Embankment to Trafalgar Square to protest against the Asylum Bill.

A Country Diary

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Perhaps he should look northward. At the same time as the London demo, there was a much larger, successful demonstration taking place in Liverpool in support of the sacked dockers and their dynamic women supporters. Keith Sinclair, Secretary, Hull Trades Council, 27 Strathmore Avenue, Hull HU6 7LJ.

raising large sums for things like the new cover for the swimming pool, which my 11-year-old guides showed me. We saw the welcoming library in what used to be the schoolmaster's living and dining rooms, the store in his bedroom, and computers in his bedrooms. In the hall, the playgroup that uses it three times a week was busy, and on the shelves was a fine collection of percussion instruments. More than half the children learn an instrument. One of my guides comes on foot from Duck Laze, just around the corner past the pond. There are children and grandchildren of former pupils on the roll. Last year, some of the residents who remembered the war came in to reminisce. The children listened and produced a wonderful publication called "Will it ever end?" and a dramatization that played to packed houses at St Margaret's Hall a few yards down the lane. JOHN WALLINS





10 OBITUARIES

Ron Hayward

The scourge of Militant

RON HAYWARD, who has died aged 78, was general secretary of the Labour Party during one of the most difficult periods of the party's history. His tenure of the post will always be remembered by the memory of the problems which beset the party at the end of the 1970s.



Stand and deliver... Ron Hayward at a Labour Party Conference in Blackpool

He owed his promotion within the party hierarchy to the fact that he was known as an independent-minded left-winger. But while he was a first class tactical operator, he was not particularly ambitious. In his early days as a party agent he would probably have been more surprised than anyone at the suggestion that by 1976 Tony Benn could write in his Diaries that Ron Hayward — along with Harold Wilson, Jack Jones and Michael Foot — "make up the quadrumvirate that runs the party".

He owed his election as general secretary in 1972 to Benn's vote. It occurred in hilarious circumstances. It had been assumed that the deputy general secretary, Gwyn Morgan, would succeed to the post, but the left-wingers on the National Executive Committee supported Hayward as an alternative candidate. Harold Wilson, who was then Leader of the Opposition, had declared that he would not vote — but was persuaded that the election of Morgan and a victory for supporters of Roy Jenkins. Wilson supported Hayward and the candidates tied at 14 votes each.

It was then proposed that Benn, as party chairman, should have the casting vote and this, too, tied at 14 votes each. The meeting adjourned and Wilson discreetly persuaded an elderly trade union delegate that while he did not need to switch his vote away from Morgan, he could nevertheless vote in favour of allowing the chairman to use

his casting vote. This was carried. Benn voted for Hayward — and so began his 10 years of torment at Transport House and, latterly, in the new headquarters in Walworth Road to which he oversaw the party's transfer.

During an interview Hayward gave on his election, one of the most often told stories about him originated. He was born in Oxfordshire and always retained a vivid reminder of that in his accent. I asked him about his leisure interests and how he had spent his boyhood, and I thought he replied that he was very fond of skating. I inquired politely whether he preferred roller-skating or ice-skating. He looked extremely puzzled before replying that he was talking about "boy scouting".

His voice, his friendly pipe-smoking image and his homely metaphors — he once described the Labour Party as having "as many cucumbers as Heinz had soup" — all assisted to provide an accurate picture of a genial party official. But he was a shrewd politician, too. He started work as an apprentice cement-maker in 1947. When Wilson resigned in 1976, Hayward suggested to a sceptical Benn that "things got too much for him and he's lost his nerve". History suggests that Hayward was probably right.

Mary Lavin

Ireland's acute observer

MARY LAVIN, who has died aged 83, was born in Massachusetts, but grew up and was educated in Ireland. As a short-story writer, she will be remembered with O'Flaherty, O'Faolain and O'Connor, though her voice was entirely her own. Another renowned practitioner of the art — Elizabeth Bowen — described the modern storyteller's task as revealing the hidden significance of "the small event", and in this Lavin succeeded superbly well.

Ireland — always a fruitful breeding ground for short-story writers — individual stories are remembered and talked about, as novels are elsewhere. That predilection Lavin helped to conserve, while finding a place for elements of the antique form in the second half of the 20th century. In much of what she wrote there is a faint echo of the oral tradition, cunningly utilised.

Lavin's stories eschew self-importance and that shrillness which is the bane of the form. They are subtle without making a palaver about it, beautifully told, no pat endings, no slickness, and as in life, nothing is resolved. A wife newly received into the Church, has a miscarriage and worries obsessively about the soul of her lost child. A boy, growing up, is consumed by his parents' marriage. "I'll always be a cockroach," a peasant priest cries miserably, "crushed under somebody's feet." The harshness and gentleness that mingle so often in the Irish character is repeatedly, acutely, observed.

A sense of sorrow often lingers, as does the whiff of mystery. And such shadows are never just there by accident. In one story, a girl, who has been married for 10 years, finds that she has a child. She is not sure if it is her own or the child of the man she has married, but if for any reason that was not possible, he'd unload her on to some ageing but compliant man. In another, a young girl, who has been married for 10 years, finds that she has a child. She is not sure if it is her own or the child of the man she has married, but if for any reason that was not possible, he'd unload her on to some ageing but compliant man.

Claude Mauriac

Details in a diverse life

IN 1939 Claude Mauriac, who has died aged 61, was sitting in the corner of the room listening to his father, Francois, and André Gide arguing about the merits of Alfred de Musset. Each quoted abundantly from memory, but Claude was silent. He did not know the poetry of Musset by heart. "He's a barbarian," his father said. Francois Mauriac also wrote a journal, *Sarcotique*, in which his son occasionally appears: "Claude carried me two suitcases, I took Claude to Notre Dame to show him where Claudel was converted..."



Claude Mauriac... Journals with a fascinating cast

Thus Claude is a shadowy figure. But he made his own mark on French literature. Firstly as a novelist of the *nouveau roman*, who won the Prix Médicis in 1958. Whereas Francois had told stories and invented real people, Claude redefined the territory of fiction and sought to communicate the contents of individual consciousness rather than invent plots. And secondly as a memoirist publishing his journal in 13 volumes (with a 14th in the press).

Jackdaw



Basquiat rock

THIS IS NOT Black Art. I maintain, and this is NOT ART, well no, this is STUFF and I like it, yeah, yeah, yeah. This STUFF rocks. A two-headed Janus of an approach, vomiting and questioning at the same time. A squash of Schwitters sound and nonsense, learning tabulations of pre-Socratic philosophers' jostle, or rubber 'gains' Penk. Like a *baad* reading of Lautrémont's "Beautiful as a chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on a dissecting table". But nothing surreal here. The dreaming is forced into the dawn of our consciousness. Confuse me,

Chance juxtaposition. Your chance is not the same as my chance... No order, no function. Basquiat takes a cursive swipe and re-establishes the disorder that is reality. The pure joyful chaotic miasma of it all. Goo-goo-ga-oo. Refracting fact fractions facting refact. He's milking the dictionary, wiping up the puddles of Anglo debris and scoffing the lot. He's stealing us limb by word... After Warhol's death in 1986, Jean-Michel himself started to die bit by bit. This ugly and tragic code will probably be the Hemdrix-Cobain factor that will speed his reputation into the beyond. The Temple of Guys who died for their art. It's a drag. Rubber-sucking at the crash-site shall take place. The more STUFF that goes up on the wall, the less it will be seen. Eyes searching for drug clues — how black was he, how white inside, can you see him being sad or happy? Look for a long time and we'll see him wave... His STUFF is the continually dividing cell of our future-past. Embryos with all the cross-referenced features

in place. But the stash was terminated before maturity. I should like to have seen it all grown-up. David Bowie dabbles in hyper-prose for his appreciation of the artist Jean-Michel Basquiat in the magazine *Modern Painters*. Clarke checked AS A READER of Prospect since its inception, I have been amused by Jeremy Clarke's regular contributions. But in the latest issue I feel he has gone too far. To burden his column to unburden some of the guilt he must feel about episodes from his past life is one thing; but to abuse his position as a man of letters to preen and gloat over his eminent fortune — derived as it presumably is from an autobiography filled to the gunwhales with even shabbier accounts — is quite another.

Our relationship, if it can be called that, has continued ever since. Recently, however, it has taken a rather sour turn. Far from being the diffident cove that his writings would have the reader believe, his elevation to the ranks of the wealth-sodden literati has revealed a distasteful side to his character. It is well known to him that I am currently in straitened circumstances. This has done nothing to prevent him from pestering me with abusive telephone calls, informing me of the sort of financial auction for his autobiography. Prefacing his tirades with the quip "How fare the poor this day?" he proceeds to speak of quantities of cash that I can barely comprehend.

ungentlemanly. Please do not give him continued succour. A letter from disgruntled *Victim Steven Heath of Westcliffe-on-Sea, in Prospect*. Glug, glug, glug AT BOOT camp, we've been knocking down and squaring up to bring you the perfect magazine for the next millennium. You know, the multi-media mushroom cloud, the global village, the starry tech future and all that. Well, all the good news is we wanted to sort out an e-mail address for those of you who prefer downloading electronic correspondence to writing on pulped-up Norwegian pine. Unfortunately, we spent too much time boarding, bingeing and re-running a video of Bjork's impersonation of Mike Tyson at Bangkok airport to create a web site on the Net. Call us "old skool" (go on) but we'd still rather live in the real world than surf a virtual one. We're your intolerant neighbour upstairs, cranking up Daft Punk's Da Funk at three in the morning. We're the ones

queuing behind you in sub-zero temperatures, trying to get into a Big gig rammed tighter than a... Okay, you know the story. We're the ones who got sent promos of the Lynch Mob remix of Champagne Supernova. That's us in the corner, sneaking in through a secret door with an "all areas" laminate, under the protection of Michael Jackson's minders. Just remember, though, we'll

only be using those free drinks vouchers at the after-show party in an effort to wessel our way backstage and get an exclusive scoop for you. Well, if you insist, just one more pint... From the editorial to the inaugural issue of *Blah Blah Blah*, produced by the company behind the *American music magazine Ray Gun*, in association with MTV.

Church signs ● Don't let worry kill you — Let the church help. ● Thursday night — potluck supper. Prayer and meditation to follow. ● For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs. ● This afternoon there will be a meeting in the south and north ends of the church. Children will be baptised at both ends. ● Wednesday, the Ladies Liturgy Society will meet. Mrs Jones will sing *Fut Mio in My Little Bed* accompanied by the pastor. ● Thursday at 5.00pm there will be a meeting of the Little

Letters

Andrew Roth writes: Claude Bourdet (obituary, March 25) was one of the effervescent spirits of the French left. I got to appreciate him as the London correspondent of *France-Observateur* in the 1960s. Regular telephone contact was refreshed personally every year, especially in the early 1980s, by his visits to Labour conferences usually as a guest speaker at Tribune meetings. His excellent English and bubbling sense of the ridiculous made him very popular. He got on very well with Michael Foot, Arthur Bevan and Jennie Lee, but could be touchingly trusting about comrades' promises. He once told me with pride that he had persuaded Bevan to write an article for him. I warned him not to count on it, because Nye was tied to a rival French weekly which paid considerably better, but Claude announced the article. A few days later he called in a panic. The article had not arrived and he could not raise Nye or Jennie. Would I try? Knowing Jennie's hatred of journalists, I reluctantly agreed. When I got hold of Jennie, she barked something down the telephone. The article never arrived. This did not stop Claude from accepting the next October's invitation to speak at the Tribune meeting. At the preceding dinner, Jennie evidently leant over to him and urged, "Will you please stop Andy Roth harassing us?" Any editor who could turn a grinning cheek to that sort of treatment deserves a special place in a journalists' heaven.

Another day

March 26, 1940: Had to leave to go to Sadler's Wells with Rowena. During the interval we had cocoa and Welsh rarebit at the Angel Cafe, while I sat with her "uncle", and how nice sex is. She says it's the best indoor recreation she has yet discovered, particularly in the afternoon which is the only time he can get away from his wife. She says it's like an old French song which just goes on and on, and I really ought to try it. I asked her what she did to prevent herself getting pregnant, and she said there are things called Volpar Gels which are quite effective, but the best thing is to go to the Marie Stopes clinic and get a Dutch cap. I told her all about Gerhardt and Jo, and she said it sounded very boring and rather decadent. Of course I'm not decadent at all really. I only wish I could see her. *Hans, Love Lessons: A Wartime Diary*, Heinemann, 1985.

Birthdays

Alan Arkin, actor, 62; Graham Barlow, cricketer, 46; Pierre Boulez, conductor and composer, 71; James Caan, actor, 57; Carole Carr, singer, 68; Kyung-wa Chang, concert pianist, 45; John Cleese, actor, director, British Institute of International and Comparative Law, 42; Lord Graham of Edmonton, Chief Labour Whip, House of Lords, 71; William Hague, MP, Secretary of State for Wales, 54; Jean Graham, singer, 61; former circuit judge, Lord Ross of QC, crown court recorder, 71; Elizabeth Jane Howard, novelist, 73; Sir George Jefferson, former chairman, British Telecom, 75; Erica Jong, writer, 54; Prof Sir Bernard Katz, biologist, 82; Sir Leslie Melville, economist, 94; James Moody, saxophonist, 71; Leonard Nimoy, actor, 65; Terry Pryce, chairman, Solway Foods, 62; Harry Rabinowitz, conductor and composer, 80; Diana Ross, singer and actress, 52; Colin Webb, former editor-in-chief, Press Association, 57; Charles Wheeler, broadcaster, 73.

In Memoriam

DONNELLY, Niall who freed himself in the gun only on March 28th 1992. Loved, missed and lives in our hearts. MTO place your remembrance telephone 0171 713 4967. Fax 0171 713 4121.

Brokers... elec... Dan Glaister

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer  
Telephone: 0171-239-9610  
Fax: 0171-833-4456

# Finance Guardian

### Bulmer pays £23m to add cider strength

**B**ULMER, Britain's biggest cider group, yesterday toasted its decision to splash out and add brands such as Stonehouse and White Lightning to its portfolio of top-selling Strongbow and Scrumpy. Jack, writes Lisa Buckingham.



PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

### Notebook Halifax is making a Clerical error



Edited by Alex Brummer

**D**ESPITE all the speculation to the contrary, it is the Halifax which has emerged from the crowd to secure an agreed deal to take control on the Clerical Medical. More than 40 different financial institutions expressed an interest in Clerical since it effectively put itself on the market in May 1995, when it asked merchant bankers Schroders to look at its options. The choice of the Halifax as the favoured buyer is something of a surprise in that so much attention has been focused on NatWest, which already has joint interest with Clerical Medical in NatWest Life - a deal which will no doubt be unplucked in the course.

#### Beef respite

**T**HE immediate financial market reaction to the Government's decision to tough out the BSE crisis was to rally. The pound which had been under pressure for much of the day picked up momentum, gift prices moved off their lows although the statement came too late to reassure already 12 points down. However, the ruling by the European Union which has imposed a ban on British exports, together with the commercial judgment of food chains from Whitbread to Wimpuy to take British beef off the menu, must change the UK's food economics. Meat prices may be heading down, benefiting the retail price index in the short term, but this will quickly be overshadowed by poultry prices, already 12 per cent up since the weekend with some way to go.

#### Mercury's stroke

**S**ECURICOR is one of those companies which has been considered rather unglamorous. However, following the disclosure that it is modernising its antiquated shares, Securicor deserves fresh attention.

## Labour strains over training

Richard Thomas and Larry Elliott

**S**ENIOR Labour figures last night attacked the party's decision to back away from a compulsory training levy on businesses claiming that tax breaks for individuals seeking to retrain were a poor substitute.

Accounts and is being criticised internally for diluting what is seen as a key plank of Labour's economic policy. "It's all very thin," said one Labour critic. "Training is supposed to be one of our flagship policies. But this doesn't add up to much."

The Shadow Chancellor's initiative, Lorraine Deardon, at the Institute for Fiscal Studies, said that all privately funded vocational courses below post-graduate level had been free of tax since 1992. "It is difficult to see what is new here," she said. Ms Deardon also said more details would be needed before assessing any expenditure implications.

For example to cover MBAs. Of course, employers have a responsibility to train employees, but individuals do too - and the Government certainly does. We support voluntary ILAs. Mr Brown insisted his proposals would ameliorate the effects of fears over jobs losses.

### Imro launches inquiry into Jardine firm

Dan Atkinson

**R**EGULATORS are investigating how the Regulator owned jointly by the Jardine Matheson trading empire and Robert Fleming, the investment bank.

Henry Strutt, managing director of JFAM's Hong Kong-based parent, Jardine Fleming Holdings, said: "We regard compliance with the utmost importance... and we are actively co-operating with Imro. While the investigation is in progress, however, it is not appropriate to comment further."

### New Securicor eases Cellnet hold-up

Ian King

**S**ECURICOR paved the way yesterday for the sale of its 40 per cent stake in Cellnet, Britain's second-biggest mobile phone network, with a long-awaited shake-up of its share structure.

Shareholder, British Telecom, barred last year from increasing its holding by the Department of Trade and Industry. Chief executive Roger Wiggin said: "Although other parties have expressed interest, no discussions are taking place with BT or any third parties."

### London brokers help set up rival to Telecom Eirann

Paul Murphy

**T**HE Cruise O'Brien family knows a bit about telephones. A particularly colourful patch in the career of father Conor was in the mid-1970s as Ireland's Minister for Posts and Telegraphs.

until 2003 to deregulate fully. Meanwhile, a buyer is being sought for 30 per cent of Telecom Eirann, and a few competitors are picking away at the market.

### Poultry prices up 12pc as BSE scare hits home

Dairy group shares feel knock-on effect of switch from beef - but others benefit.

Lisa Buckingham and Ian King report

**T**HE price of poultry shot up by 12 per cent over the weekend and is expected to rise by almost as much again as the BSE scare hits home.

spread to milk and dairy products such as yogurt. All the large supermarket groups are understood to have recorded heavy falls in beef sales at the weekend - put at between 30 and 50 per cent by industry observers - and most were reimbursing customers who bought meat before the disclosures of a risk to human health.

### Swebgas is shopped to Office of Fair Trading

Geoffrey Gibbs

**S**WEBGAS, the gas supply watchdog of South Western Electricity, has been reported to the Office of Fair Trading and the gas industry watchdog, Ofgas, following an investigation by trading standards officers into complaints about its doorstep selling.



### Love is... working for a hated utility, say bosses

Martyn Haisall, Northern Industrial Correspondent

**E**XECUTIVES aiming for some ego-inflating adoration from their workforces would do well to steer their careers in the direction of some of Britain's most hated companies such as the privatised utilities.

They did not cover the views of utility shareholders. In retail, and travel and transport only 37 and 51 per cent respectively felt "loved". The balance felt some staff nursed dislike or hatred.

TOURIST RATES - BANK SELLS

Australia 1.52	France 7.47	Italy 2.340	Singapore 2.12
Austria 15.25	Germany 2.1950	Malta 0.5425	South Africa 5.82
Belgium 45.00	Greece 363.00	Netherlands 2.465	Spain 163.50
Canada 2.225	Hong Kong 11.63	New Zealand 2.19	Sweden 10.02
Cyprus 0.70	India 53.07	Norway 9.58	Switzerland 1.76
Denmark 8.47	Ireland 0.955	Portugal 227.00	Turkey 99.900
Finland 8.89	Israel 4.73	Saudi Arabia 5.66	USA 1.4660

Walther:  
'The best  
— and  
clearly  
preferred  
— bidder  
was the  
Halifax'



Life style... Clerical Medical boss Robert Walther (left) seals the deal with Halifax chief executive Michael Blackburn  
PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK MARTIN

# Clerical goes to Halifax

Now the spotlight is turned on NatWest, also shopping for a life insurer, reports **Pauline Springett** while **Jill Papworth** looks at who gains from yesterday's deal

**T**HE shake-up in the UK life and pensions industry was given fresh impetus yesterday when the Halifax Building Society said it had agreed to buy life insurer Clerical Medical for £800 million.

The move immediately focused attention on National Westminster Bank, which is believed to have been thwarted in its bid to purchase Clerical Medical by the higher price offered by Halifax.

City sources suggest that

NatWest was poised to make an imminent bid for another life company. A spokesman for the bank declined to comment. "We have been linked with 23 companies in the past few months and on every occasion our policy is not to comment on any of them," he said.

Last month NatWest agreed to buy fund manager Gartmore for £472 million and it is perceived to be keen to make a further acquisition.

It is cash rich thanks to the £2.3 billion raised recently by the sale of its US-based retail

banking chain Bancorp. The purchase of a life company would boost NatWest Life but analysts have also suggested the bank could resort to a share buy-back.

The Clerical Medical/Halifax link-up should be completed by the year end. But it must first be approved by 75 per cent of Clerical Medical members who vote at an extraordinary general meeting in June, as well as by the High Court in October.

The £800 million purchase price will be paid in cash. Most of this will be added to Clerical Medical's with-profit fund, with £70 million injected as shareholders capital.

The deal will allow Halifax access to Clerical Medical's independent financial advisory network — the distribution area in which Halifax has a noticeable gap. It will

also give Clerical Medical financial security by underpinning it with the capital base of the UK's largest building society.

Robert Walther, chief executive of Clerical Medical, said the group had started to review its future in May last year. It had concluded that it would be unable to meet the expected sales boom in the life industry unless it had access to more capital. He warned that, without a buyer, it would probably have been forced eventually to cease taking on new business.

"By moving early we have found the best parent with the Halifax," he said. Mr Walther said Clerical Medical had evaluated 40 possible buyers and had held detailed negotiations with a few. "The best and the earliest the preferred was the Halifax."

Mr Walther indicated that Halifax had offered more money than its rivals but he also pointed out that the deal was attractive because it contained little overlap between the two businesses.

Clerical Medical said its 7.5 per cent stake in NatWest Life — a relationship which is due to expire in 1998 anyway — would be unaffected by the Halifax deal.

Apart from NatWest there are believed to have been around three rival bidders — a foreign group, a composite insurer and a life company. The unsuccessful bids are understood to have been in the region of £600 million to £700 million.

Analysts are expecting a flurry of takeovers in the life industry. Scottish Amicable, Norwich Union, Friends Provident and Scottish Wid-

## Who gets what...

**SOME 700,000 people** holding one million Clerical Medical with-profits policies between them will qualify for special bonuses if the acquisition goes ahead. Each policy qualifies for a separate bonus.

The vast majority of qualifying policies are 25-year with-profits endowments linked to mortgages and 10-year savings plans.

Some 50,000 personal pension plan holders who have some or all of their investment in Clerical Medical's with-profits fund will benefit, too, as will about 100,000 holders of unit-linked endowments newly invested in the with-profits fund.

Investors who will not qualify for special bonuses include holders of unit trusts, personal equity plans (PEPs), most personal pension plans and unit-linked endowments, and offshore policies.

With-profits policies in force between March 22 and the end of the year will get a special bonus of 4.72 per cent to 6.5 per cent of the total annual ("reversionary") bonuses already earned.

The bigger the policy and the longer it has been in force, the bigger the bonus. Examples include £1,172 per cent on a £20,000 with-profits policy which has been in force for 15 years, and £390 on a £10,000 policy in force for 10 years.

Qualifying policyholders will also benefit over the long term. The £800 million the Halifax is putting into the with-profits fund to boost future returns.

Clerical Medical's 24-hour policyholder information line is on 0800-100555.

## Lang supports share perks for nuclear chiefs

**Chris Barrie**

**T**HE Government is prepared to back a share option package for nuclear industry executives and senior managers as part of its plans to privatise the industry this summer.

Speaking yesterday at the official opening of the industry's newest station, the pressurised water reactor Sizewell B in Suffolk, the Trade and Industry Secretary, Ian Lang, said that he supported the use of share options as a means of widening share ownership.

Mr Lang's defence of executive perks comes as MPs prepare to debate nuclear privatisation today.

His remarks follow the stance taken three weeks ago when John Robb, chairman of British Energy, publicly backed executive share options as a way of motivating staff, despite controversy over "fat cat" salaries in the privatised regional electricity and water companies.

British Energy was the name given to the company formed to take the newer reactors into the private sector in July.

Accompanied by the Environment Secretary, John Gummer, Mr Lang braved anti-nuclear protesters with

placards ("The Meek Shall inherit the Nuclear Waste") at the Suffolk station to declare it officially open eight years after construction started.

Seeking to reassure investors about the safety of nuclear power in private hands, Mr Lang promised that regulatory bodies were close to finishing their scrutiny of the new management structure established ahead of privatisation.

He said "all the necessary licences and consents are expected to be in place for the vesting of the new companies in less than a week's time".

Negotiations were continuing over the capital structure of British Energy.

With BE's vesting day due in five days, the industry secretary said he was confident that talks would be concluded despite the tight timetable. A trade sale was still an option.

The segregated fund to finance the costs of decommissioning BE's atomic stations, seven advanced gas-cooled reactors and the PWR at Sizewell, will receive a dovery of £200 million from the company and annual contributions of £16 million for the first five years thereafter.

By contrast, analysts at ERM, which is advising the Government, had estimated contributions to be pegged at £22 million.

### News in brief

#### Budgie hovers towards the stage

**SLEEPY Kids**, the cartoon character licensing group, is bringing **Budgie the helicopter**, to the stage. The character created by the Duchess of York will make its debut in next month in **Budgie's Magic Adventure**. The play has been licensed to **Funtime Productions**, which has bookings at more than 100 UK theatres.

Keeping up its royal links, **Sleepy Kids** is preparing to launch a range of leisure wear for the **Prince's Trust**. Chairman **Martin Powell** told shareholders at the group's annual meeting that trading was progressing well. — *Ian King*

#### Hodder profits tumble

**HODDER** headline, which assailed the Net Book Agreement by selling out-price copies of **John Le Carré** through supermarkets, yesterday reported a £2.5 million drop in profits to £5.7 million.

The publisher, which gave advance warning of poor results for 1995, said there were encouraging signs since the collapse of the agreement. Like-for-like sales in January and February were 12 per cent higher. Shares rose 13p to 238p. — *Lisa Buckingham*

#### More look at houses

**HOPES** of a housing market recovery were expressed by the **House Builders' Federation** yesterday. An independent survey of 387 house builders found that 44 per cent had more visitors to their sites last month than in February 1995 and 45 per cent had more reservations.

But **Tony Homes** said 1995 was the worst in the trade for 30 years and the six months to December 31 ended with profits down from £2.05 million to £200,000. **Trevor Perkins**, the building materials group, saw profits ease 5 per cent to £36.5 million in 1995, but hopes for improved trading conditions this year. — *Tony May*

#### Ionica launch stalled

**IONICA** has been forced to postpone today's launch of its challenge to BT's virtual monopoly of local phone networks with an innovative radio telephone service. The Cambridge company insisted that its digital technology was working properly, but said a meeting of the main operating divisions yesterday decided that "a few more weeks" of preparation was needed.

Chief executive **Nigel Playford** denied the delay had been sparked by last week's call by Ofel, industry regulator, for substantial reductions in phone charges over the next five years. — *Simon Beavis*

#### \$1bn BCCI cash 'in US'

Liquidators of **Bank of Credit and Commerce International** believe they may be able to recover up to another \$1 billion (£87.9 million) in the United States to help repay creditors, a London court heard yesterday. **Michael Crystal**, counsel for **DeLoitte & Touche**, is asking the Vice-Chancellor, **Sir Richard Scott**, to reject the claims of four sets of creditors to priority.

Mr Crystal said the liquidator had so far recovered \$244 million in the US, part of which will be put towards increasing the pool from which creditors will be paid a dividend, presently 30 per cent of their claims. The hearing continues. — *Reuter*

#### Thousand more jobs to go at Barclays

**BARCLAYS** Bank yesterday revealed plans to axe another 1,000 jobs — involving 350 managers and 650 clerical workers. The move is in addition to the 500 staff cuts announced by the bank earlier this month, writes **Pauline Springett**.

The jobs cuts come amid turmoil in the financial services sector which, due to takeovers and new technology, has shed 120,000 jobs in the last six years, 85,000 of them in banking.

The banking union **Bifu** and **Barclays** staff union **Unifi** reacted angrily to the announcement. **Bifu** said Barclays had already axed 21,000 jobs since 1991: the union warned that 10,000 more could go by the end of the decade.

"These are the people the bank and customers can ill afford to lose. We're talking of some of the most experienced managers and clerical staff left in Barclays. It's only the beginning of a whole new wave

of job losses," said **Rob Macgregor**, assistant secretary of **Bifu**.

**Unifi** said the cuts had "shocked and devastated" the bank's workforce, while the remaining staff were working excessive hours.

**Barclays** spokeswoman said the bank had shed 18,500 jobs since 1991, and stressed that it was also creating jobs in new areas, such as telephone banking. She said the jobs would go via a voluntary early leavers scheme.

## Inchcape is sharpening focus — and axe

**OUTLOOK/ Distributor's dilemma will cost 2,000 jobs. Roger Cowe reports**

**INCHCAPE** planned to focus on fewer, bigger businesses and to cut costs. That was in 1994. Yesterday, as profits all but disappeared under the weight of the latest restructuring charges, new chief executive **Philip Cushing** promised more of the same — focus and cost-cutting, that is, not falling profits.

Mr Cushing has been group managing director for the past year. He took over yesterday from **Charles Mackay**, who has briefly been elevated to the post of deputy chairman before leaving at the end of June. Mr Mackay has paid the price of three years' falling earnings and is part of the cost-cutting, although no doubt there will be a hefty price in ending his two-year, £200,000-a-year contract.

The new chairman, **British Airways**' **Sir Colin Marshall**, said: "There was a top-heavy position at senior management level and I have reached agreement with Mr Mackay to step down as chief executive."

More than 2,000 others will also pay the price as the

group seeks to "realign its cost base", although presumably with less substantial compensation.

Their misfortune arises in part from a specific, short-term problem in Inchcape's main business — car distribution — but a long-term difficulty also bedevils the group. That is its history as a collection of family interests with trading activities across Asia.

The latest bit of focusing, announced yesterday, was the intended disposal of the bulk of the services division. The insurance broker **Bain Clarke** son will be either floated on the stock market, or sold if a buyer can be found who will offer enough money. The testing services operation has also been put up for sale. Shipping will be the only remaining service area, and while Mr Cushing was at pains to stress its links with other group activities, that retention may have more to do with a lack of options.

Insurance and testing were the only businesses to increase profits last year, so this may smack of selling the

family silver. But Mr Cushing is confident that he can reverse the profit decline elsewhere, especially in the motor division.

This accounted for more than \$4 billion of sales and almost half of the profits even after a precipitous decline last year.

It incorporates retailing, through franchises such as **Mann Egerton** in the UK, and international distribution, and has grown sharply with the advance of Japanese manufacturers into Europe. Inchcape is particularly closely aligned with **Toyota**. It has been the carmaker's UK distributor for almost 30 years, with the current agreement running until 2008.

**T**HEREIN lies the problem. Japanese manufacturers have suffered as the strong yen has hit their competitiveness. Last year Inchcape's sales of Japanese cars were down by 8 per cent in Europe and 17 per cent elsewhere in the world. The struggle to maintain market share hit profit margins,

since the only way to sell cars was to give away money.

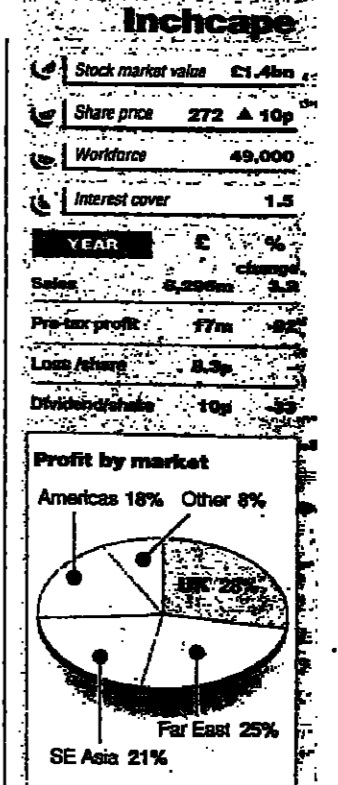
Now Mr Cushing has a four-point plan for profit recovery: weed out poor franchisees, improve the network's efficiency, shorten the supply chain and sell financial services to car buyers.

But the problems are not just in Europe. Hong Kong car sales plummeted by a third last year, for example.

There is no knowing what impact the Chinese takeover of Hong Kong will have, but it is reasonable to assume that Japanese manufacturers will be able to bounce back, through new products and production in low-cost countries, such as the UK.

In the long term, however, Inchcape remains vulnerable because of its position as an intermediary, whether in importing cars or office equipment or bottling Coke. Distributors are always at the mercy of brand owners.

Inchcape's position straddling the east-west divide is a tremendous advantage, but may not offset the handicap of agency status.



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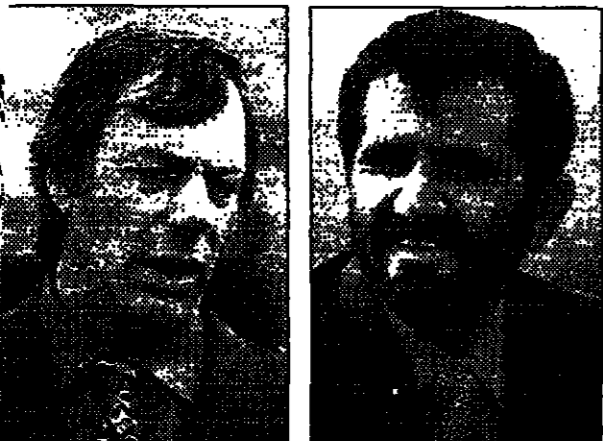
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Lang support... share perks... nuclear chiefs



Henry Cecil... a champion

Racing's World Cup takes place in Dubai tomorrow. Chris Hawkins hears the thoughts of the man behind the \$4m race in the desert

# Sheikh on a dream carpet ride

IT GOES without saying that there is nothing second-rate about Sheikh Mohammed, one of the world's richest men and in the realms of horse racing certainly one of the most revered.

But he is human, and yesterday, as he sat cross-legged on the richly red-carpeted floor of what must be the world's most splendid desert tent, he admitted that his year-old, the Dubai World Cup, which takes place tomorrow, has worried him.

"I was nervous, but not now," he said. "I am happy. I am very proud. The World Cup was a dream plan which has come off.

"Cigar is here and has the chance to prove himself the real world champion. Each country has its own champion. We hear so-and-so is the best but never have we got them together.

"It will be good for the World Cup if Cigar wins, but it will also be good for us if we win."

Sheikh Mohammed's personal and family hope is pinned on Halling, Tamayaz, Larrocha and Torrental, all horses trained in England last season but wintering in Dubai under the Gulf sun and the Godolphin banner.

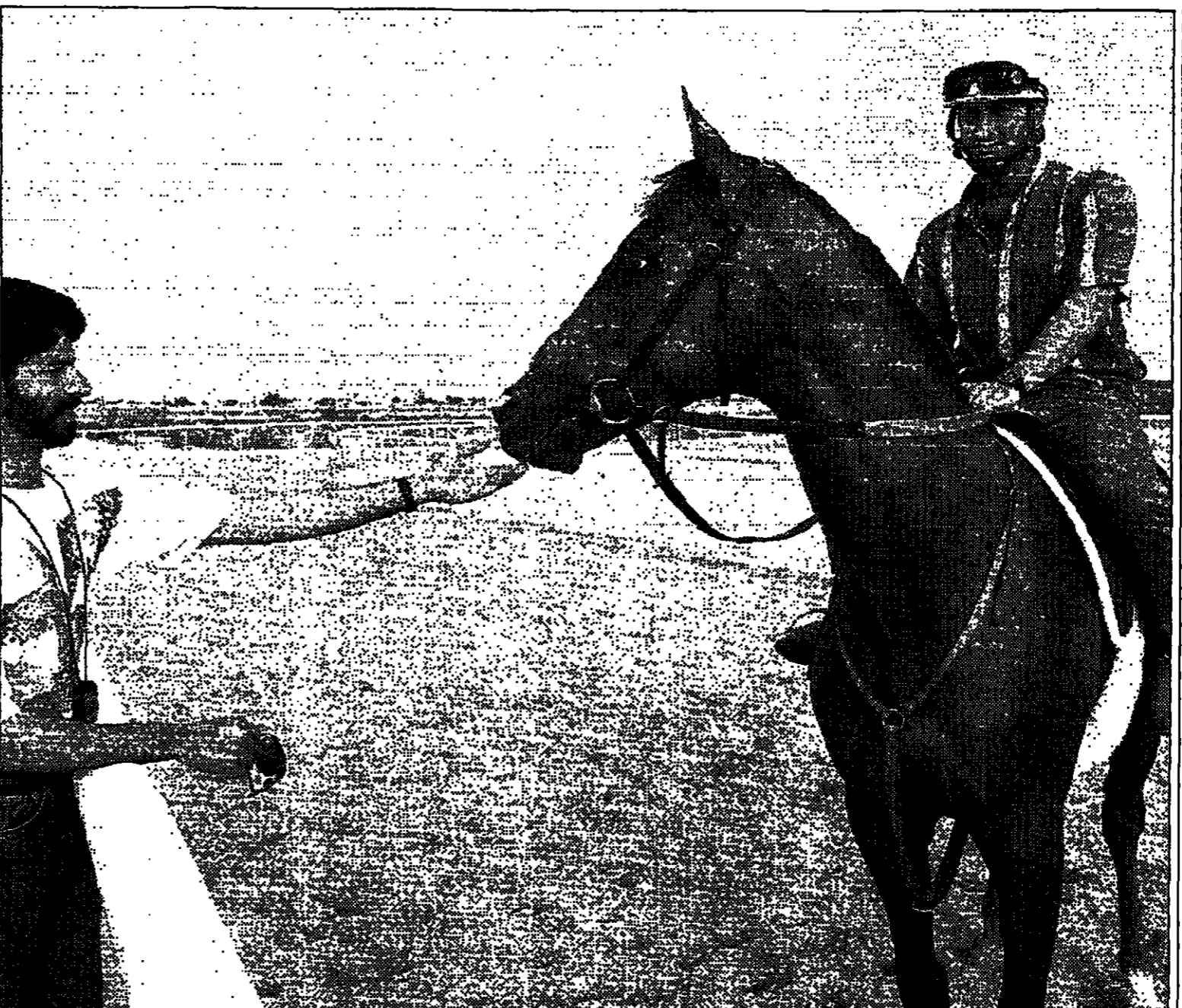
He looked on approvingly as all four were paraded at his private Al-Quoz stables yesterday and it is hard to imagine thoroughbreds looking in better condition.

"Halling is in the best shape of his life and we are very confident he will run much better than in America, where Cigar beat him," said the Sheikh.

When Sheikh Mohammed gives an opinion it is not to be taken lightly. He likes giving opinions, does not mind counter-views, but ultimately, one suspects, likes to have the last word.

Henry Cecil found that out last season when he was removed from the list of the Sheikh's trainers after a dispute about a two-year-old colt called Mark Of Esteem.

Much has been written about the split, but Sheikh Mohammed seemed to want to put the record straight



Coming to hand... Halling, Sheikh Mohammed's main hope for the Dubai World Cup, accepts a tit-bit from his trainer, Saeed bin Suwairi

and for all. "Before I came, Henry Cecil was a great trainer, a champion trainer, and I'm sure he will be again. Perhaps I shall have horses with him one day again.

"But Henry wants to get his own way and I keep taking him on. We fight it, it was always there for a long time. The incident to which Sheikh Mohammed is referring is the withdrawal of Mark Of Esteem from the Royal Lodge Stakes at Ascot last September.

"The colt is now in Dubai

and being prepared to take on Alharbi, owned by Mohammed's brother, Sheikh Hamdan, in the 2,000 Guineas at Newmarket.

"Mark Of Esteem is going well now. He could be the one, Sheikh Mohammed said. "When he came he was lame - he has an arthritic spur in a knee. We could have had him operated on like Arazi, but it didn't seem to do him any good. He will go straight for the Guineas."

How the Godolphin horses come over and sweep all before them in England and Europe last season was so upsetting for many English trainers, who will not want such success repeated, and Sheikh Mohammed concedes it is unlikely. "Last year was wonderful but it doesn't happen every year," he said. "Lammarra was very sick this time last year. I thought he was dying. He had a big heart, that horse. If you

knew him as much as I did it was not fair that he was not voted horse of the year."

This year, Godolphin will be sending 40 horses over at the end of April. Time trials will decide which ones come, but there will be more two-year-olds among them this time.

There are 26 juveniles at Al-Quoz, including Barad, a half-brother to Arazi by Rainbow Quest, and Marazi, a little chestnut son of Arazi.

# National set for a low turn-out

Ken Oliver

MARTIN PIPE has ruled out Milnner from Saturday's Grand National. The 12-year-old, who won the race two years ago, has failed to recapture his form this season and will be aimed at the Scottish National at Ayr on April 20.

Only 32 horses stood their ground at yesterday's acceptance stage, which means the race is guaranteed to have its smallest field since 1980 when 30 runners went to post.

Support for Superior Finish continues. Richard Duxwood's mount was cut to 9-1 from 12-1 by William Hill, who have eased market leader Rough Quest by half a point to 9-2.

Deep Bramble, fourth in at 10-1, continues to please in his build up to the big race. Paul Nicholls, the gelding's trainer, said yesterday: "He went very well in a spin this morning when he was partnered by Tony McCoy.

"I'm never confident about such a race, but I am confident I have got him as well as I can get him. If he gets luck on the day, I'm very hopeful he'll run a real big race. I'd say the run today is going to be on the soft side of good, which would be perfect."

Jason Tittle, who won the race last year on Royal Athlete, will ride Beward Dieu, while Dean Gallagher will ride on Into The Red after breaking a collarbone at Fontwell yesterday.

The 32 acceptors are: Antonia, Beward Dieu, Bishops Hall, Brookfield, Captain Dharma, Deep Bramble, Dextra Dove, Encore Un Pau, Far Senior, Greenfield, Into The Red, Life of A Lord, Stephen, Lusty Light, Over The Dunes, The Sireman, Pure Politics, Plastic Spunge, Super Finish, Super Mural, Tynet, Three Brownies, Topgood To Be True, Victor of Valmont, Wide Hope and Young Warrior.

## Newcastle with form guide

2.30 White	4.10 Broadstairs Beauty
2.35 Palace Street	4.15 Bony Brandy
2.38 Heston Street	4.20 Forcath

Drum: No advantage. Galloway best to win.

Owner: Mr. J. Galloway. Trainer: Mr. J. Galloway.

2.30 POLYTHENE HANDICAP STAKES 1000m

1-40023- BIRNIE (200) M 11/10 4-12

2-55- VERAST (180) M 11/10 4-12

3-100- KARAN (200) M 11/10 4-12

4-100- BATTLESOME (180) M 11/10 4-12

5-100- GREEN BOOPER (180) M 11/10 4-12

6-100- ENOVA (180) M 11/10 4-12

7-100- WIZM (180) M 11/10 4-12

## Huntingdon National Hunt card

1.30 Purplefin	3.35 Cross Cannon
2.30 Always a Cross	4.30 Anson
2.35 Pothage	4.35 Ball Staffly
	5.00 Sounds Like Fun

1.50 PURPLEFIN (180) M 11/10 4-12

2.30 ALWAYS A CROSS (180) M 11/10 4-12

2.35 POTHAGE (180) M 11/10 4-12

3.35 CROSS CANNON (180) M 11/10 4-12

4.30 ANSON (180) M 11/10 4-12

4.35 BALL STAFFLY (180) M 11/10 4-12

5.00 SOUNDS LIKE FUN (180) M 11/10 4-12

## Sandown jumping programme

3.10 Callisto Bay	4.30 POSTAGE STAMP (open)
3.15 Postage Stamp	4.35 Postage Stamp Song
3.18 Norman Conqueror	4.38 Cool Reflection

3.10 CALLISTO BAY (180) M 11/10 4-12

3.15 POSTAGE STAMP (180) M 11/10 4-12

3.18 NORMAN CONQUEROR (180) M 11/10 4-12

4.30 POSTAGE STAMP (180) M 11/10 4-12

4.35 POSTAGE STAMP SONG (180) M 11/10 4-12

4.38 COOL REFLECTION (180) M 11/10 4-12

## 4.00 Crookton Novice Handicap Chase

1-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12	1-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12
2-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12	2-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12
3-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12	3-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

## Results

1-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12	1-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12
2-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12	2-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12
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3-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12	3-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

**RACELINE**

0930 168+

NEWCASTLE SANDOWN HUNT/DON

101 201

102 202

103 203

168 368

**Results**

**POLESTONE**

1-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

2-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

3-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

**Results**

**HEXHAM**

1-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

2-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

3-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

**Results**

**HEXHAM**

1-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

2-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

3-111-22- BARKER (200) M 11/10 4-12

Soccer

# Palmer hits at Leeds 'non-triers'

lan Ross and John Duncan

**A** WEEKEND that promised so much for Leeds United ended yesterday with recriminations and infighting after one senior player accused his team-mates of not trying in Sunday's humiliating Coca-Cola Cup final defeat and two shareholders pointed an angry finger at three board members who are set to make a fortune if the club goes public.

"In my opinion the lack of effort shown by professional players in as big a game as a League Cup final was nothing short of disgraceful," said the midfielder Carlton Palmer. "I didn't play well but at least I competed. I tried, if people can come off at the end of a game and say that well, that's fine, but I don't think there were many who could."

"Some of the criticism levelled at the boss by our fans was also a disgrace. I was very disappointed with the treatment he received because he didn't deserve it. It was down to a group of players, quite a few of whom just did not perform."

One who was hardly given a chance, the Swede Tomas Brodin, announced that he is looking to leave Leeds at the end of the season only a few months after signing from Parma for \$4.5 million.

"I do not know where my future lies now," said Brodin. "I wanted to play on Sunday but the manager thinks his way and I think mine. Perhaps it's best if we go our separate ways. I have to go away and think about things, am unsure whether I want to play for Leeds United. The way I feel at the moment, the answer may well be no."

Howard Wilkinson admitted to being deeply hurt by the abuse heaped upon him as he made his way towards the

Wembley dressing-rooms but he is seemingly determined to extend an eight-year association with a club which he guided to League Championship success in 1992. Even so, he is expected to meet with his chairman, Leslie Silver, later this week to discuss a season of rank inconsistency.

Silver, though, has problems of his own, after an article in yesterday's Financial Times which showed that he and two other directors, Peter Gilman and Bill Fotherby, were set to turn the face value of their shares in the club from £25,000 to £6.5 million as a result of restructuring which sees 500 small shareholders marginalised to 2.2 per cent of the shareholding from 18 per cent.

"The argument centres around the creation and valuation of 'management shares' superior to ordinary shares owned only by the three, which are now valued at £180 each. Ordinary shares were valued at £30 each. The other shareholders - are valued at only £2. Only management shareholders can be on the board of the company that owns Leeds."

However, Gilman yesterday vigorously defended the three. "I think this is a piece of mischievous journalism. Everything that has been done was done on professional advice and approved at an AGM in 1992."

"You have to remember what the situation was then. The balance sheet of the club was in a mess and two directors, myself and Leslie Silver, were personally guaranteeing £7 million of loans with the bank. With that level of risk we needed the authority to manage the club properly. There is still work going on at the club and we still are personally guaranteeing about £7 million of loans, an amount that this is even being brought up."

## Laws charged in flying-plate case

**G**RIMSBY Town's manager Brian Laws has finally been charged with misconduct six weeks after an incident in the visitors' dressing-room at Luton that left Grimsby's Italian winger Ivano Bonetti with a fractured jaw and a trapped facial nerve.

Collins is valued at £2.65 million but, with Celtic still nursing hopes of pipping Rangers to the Scottish Premier Division title, he is unlikely to move south before the annual transfer deadline on Thursday.

## Pools Forecast

Table with 2 columns: Division and Team. Lists fixtures for Premier, First, Second, and Third Divisions.

## Results

Table with 2 columns: Division and Results. Lists scores for Soccer, Basketball, and Golf.

## Teamtalk

Table with 4 columns: Team, Score, Opponent, and Result. Lists results for various football teams.

## Sport



Kick and Tel... Paul Gascoigne leads with his right under the thoughtful gaze of the England manager at Bisham Abbey

# Platt poised to reclaim his role

David Lacey says a poor start by Terry Venables' men against Bulgaria tomorrow could see their captain back on the bridge

**T**HE CHILL easterly wind blowing across the England training ground at Bisham Abbey yesterday did nothing to warm the hearts of the players. And an even colder comfort awaits those attending tomorrow's friendly against Bulgaria.

Until recently there was a serious possibility that Platt would be among the discarded. He had had two knee operations, his form for Arsenal was unimpressive, he had not played for England since the World Cup games last summer and the progress made in his absence by Redknapp, Lee and Stone put his international future in greater doubt.

Platt's international career took off when he volleyed England's last-minute winner against Belgium in Bologna in 1990. Two years later he was England's leading scorer in Sweden at the last European Championship. Well, actually he was England's only scorer during that moribund experience.

With Stone nursing a foot injury, Redknapp on the Liverpool bench and Ince still getting himself sent off for raging at referees, the mid-field situation is fluid enough for Platt to slip back any time. A poor start at Wembley tomorrow and it may be sooner rather than later.

Scotland game in the European Championship at Wembley on June 15.

Scotland game in the European Championship at Wembley on June 15. Stay Given, the 19-year-old goalkeeper loaned by Blackburn to Sunderland, is almost certain to win his first Republic of Ireland cap in the friendly with Russia in Dublin tomorrow.

## McCoist captaining landmark

Patrick Glenn

**A**LLY MCCOIST will surely become the only "trialist" in Scottish history to captain his country when he wins his 50th cap tomorrow in the friendly with Australia at Hampden Park.

## Sport in brief

**Basketball** The ubiquitous Sir John Hall has further expanded his Tyneside sporting empire by buying the Budweiser League club Newcastle Comets. His Newcastle United Sporting Club conglomerate now comprises the Premiership soccer team, Newcastle rugby union club and the (formerly Durham) Wasps ice hockey team.

## Soccer

**FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP** Southampton (1) v Coventry (0) 1-0. Coventry (0) v Southampton (1) 0-1.

## Basketball

**WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS** (Adelaide): Russia beat Spain 86-72. Argentina beat Lithuania 86-72. France beat Italy 86-72. USA beat Canada 86-72.

## Tennis

**LESTER CHAMPIONSHIPS** (Key Stadium): Boris Becker (GER) 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 vs Andre Agassi (USA). Andre Agassi (USA) 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 vs Boris Becker (GER).

## Golf

**SCOTT MCCARRON** became the third consecutive first-time winner on the US PGA Tour when he beat Tom Watson by five strokes at the Fireproof McDermott Classic over the demanding English Turf course designed by Jack Nicklaus in New Orleans.

## Rugby Union

**CLUBS:** Crusaders v Neath (7:0); Gloucester Wanderers v Truro (7:0); Bath v Worcester (7:0); Exeter v Plymouth (7:0).

## Fixtures

**Soccer** ENGLISH LEAGUE: Second Division (19:00): Hull v Notts County, Peterborough v Blackpool (7:45); Wycombe v Bradford (7:45); York v Burnley, Mansfield v Gillingham (7:45); Huddersfield v Luton, Leyton Orient v Burnley (7:45).

## Chess

**WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL** Great Britain v France (3:30, 5:30).

## Premiership

# Dodd gives Saints a lift

Martin Thorpe

**I**T HAS not been a good few days for Ron Atkinson: his house burgled last week and another three points stolen in the fight to extend Coventry's stay in the top flight beyond 29 uninterrupted seasons.

Southampton lifted themselves out of the bottom three with the crucial victory, making way for Coventry to drop below the danger line.

Both teams had come into this game with records befitting sides struggling at the wrong end of the table, just five league wins apiece, the lowest in the Premiership. In fact, Southampton had managed just one victory in their previous 14 league games and have the performance record of a season of defeat in the previous four.

Coventry were not much better off, one win in their last 10 and also one of the toughest run-ins among the relegation contenders, the manager admitting his team's survival may eventually depend on them beating Manchester United and Liverpool, not the sort of bet most people would put their money on.

With rain having turned the going from good to heavy, passing was not easy and the lack of flowing movement could be put down partly to their but also to a shortage of telling skill from either side, with many moves floundering on misdirections and poor ball control.

Much of Southampton's poverty was explained by the loss of forward Le Tissier: that Coventry have few excuses. Brian Little, Atkinson's successor at Aston Villa, has shown you can buy success with £12 million, roughly the amount Atkinson has spent assembling his disappointing Coventry team.

They started the second half brightly but struggled early on to trouble Beasant and in fact the best chance immediately after the break fell to Southampton, Neilson assembling just wide from 20 yards.

Southampton's Beasant, Neilson, Mowbray, Dodd, Charlton, Le Tissier, Magilton, Hennessey, Hennessey, Watson (Parker, Gilman), Shipperley.

Coventry City: Ogilvie, Barrow, Duff, Edwards, Gordon, Williams, Salako (Nelson, Gil, Jess, Whelan, Dublin). Referee: S. Lodge (Barnesley).

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Advertisement for Bows, Tony Allcock, defending his world singles title in Adelaide.

Large vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, partially cut off, mentioning 'd's' and 'wants of competit'.



# SportsGuardian

## MODAHL VERDICT LEAVES IAAF FURIOUS WITH TESTING LABORATORY

Stephen Bierley in Cape Town on the embarrassing reversal for athletics only four months before the Olympic Games

# Drugs policy left in chaos

**F**OUR months before the Olympic Games the procedures for drug testing were thrown into doubt by the International Amateur Athletic Federation's decision yesterday to drop the Diane Modahl case.

The IAAF was clearly furious with the incompetence of the Lisbon laboratory which allowed Modahl's urine sample to degenerate — the basis of her defence — thus leading to serious doubts over the high level of testosterone in the sample.

"In the past we have blindly followed what we have received. The lesson is this should not be automatically followed. There must be some sort of triple check," said Istvan Gyulai, the secretary general of the IAAF.

This seems to imply that the IAAF may demand a far more hands-on approach to testing, with perhaps a third sample being analysed by their own independent experts.

Modahl, cleared on appeal by the British Athletic Federation last July, finally heard the other decision she most wanted, thousands of miles away from where it was taken. When the IAAF delivered its news in South Africa, Modahl was at a training camp in Albuquerque. She expressed her bitterness at the authorities who have opposed her. "I have fought for this for just over 20 months," she said. "Now both the IAAF and BAF have accepted my innocence."

Modahl's case was based on claims that the high levels of testosterone detected in her urine sample were created by overheated laboratory storage conditions and last week further scientific evidence was produced on her behalf by two experts.

Insisting this removed any doubts about her innocence, Modahl called on the IAAF "to do the right thing and drop the case".

Yesterday she said she must now "look to the future — first with my family, Vicente and Imani, who are my inspiration. I can also start to make plans and set some personal targets. I will continue my training in preparation for the coming season."

"However, I cannot forget the past. The powerful organisations in control of sport can make you or break you. I believe there were those who wanted to break me. But I also had powerful forces on my side.



Moment of joy... Diane Modahl and her husband Vicente, who were finally vindicated yesterday after a 19-month battle. PHOTOGRAPH: KIPPA MATTHEWS

"We have gone the distance in this battle. There is no more in the coffers but we have finally won. We have lost an awful lot on the back of this. We will ultimately lose our house because of this."

"It has been a costly fight — and not just in financial terms. The mental strain it has placed on myself, my husband and our friends has been enormous. I am very angry that it happened in the first place."

"The IAAF described it as 'the end of a long story' although clearly it is not, at least as far as the BAF is concerned. The Modahls are currently suing the federation for £480,000, comprising legal costs and loss of earnings, with the BAF stating its intention of 'defending the case rigorously'."

The 27-person IAAF council discussed the case for two hours yesterday and on the recommendation of its doping commission chairman, Professor Arne Ljungqvist, it decided not to forward the case to an arbitration panel. In other words, it believed there was no case to answer.

Modahl was banned for four years by a BAF disciplinary hearing six months after testing positive at a meeting in Lisbon in the summer of 1994.

Although she was later cleared by an appeals panel after it accepted that major scientific and legal irregularities had occurred in the testing procedure, the IAAF was not satisfied with the decision.

A recommendation was made that the matter should be forwarded to arbitration, subject to a thorough study of the scientific arguments and a further analysis of the remainder of the Modahl sample.

Three independent experts proved this was a doping offence, so there is no case to answer, said Gyulai.

Asked whether the Modahls might have recourse to reparations from the IAAF, Gyulai said there was no official po-

sition on such matters. "The council listens to all requests and ideas. The Modahls should come to the council," he said, and suggested that they might be receptive to any request. But whether these would be met is another matter.

He added that the BAF had acted impeccably within the rules but that he was aware of the controversy of the case, and the loss of money inflicted on the Modahls.

Gyulai admitted that the case would lead athletes to doubt the whole doping-testing process. "Maybe, in the long run, our decision here will give athletes assurance that a just decision can be reached in the end. I hope we are setting a precedent that the rest of the athletic world welcomes."

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## Le beau jeu comes off the canvas



Richard Williams

**I**DON'T know if Cézanne ever saw a football match but Nicolas de Stael certainly did. It was in 1952, at the Parc des Princes, a friendly between France and Sweden, and it inspired Cézanne's most brilliant disciple to the creation of a series of wonderfully evocative paintings. De Stael saw the game through eyes that had turned the beaches of the Var and the country roads of Brittany into shimmering blocks of colour.

Cézanne's most brilliant disciple? No doubt you could find an art critic to disagree. If you think people argue about football, you should hear them squabble about art. But you don't need much time with De Stael to see why he is Eric Cantona's favourite painter. There's a spontaneity and a generosity in his work that makes his suicide in 1955 seem mystifying. And, like Cézanne, De Stael could change the way you look at familiar things, even a football match.

French football is, after all, one of the decorative arts. We aren't in the habit of giving it much consideration beyond that assumption, despite Cantona's pivotal role in the recent history of our own game. David Ginola's glittering contribution to Newcastle's assault on the title only confirms the stereotype of something beautiful but evanescent. When we think of French football as a whole, if we think of it at all, we remember the glorious team led by Michel Platini in the mid-Eighties, the team of Giresse, Tigana, Amoros and Rocheteau, their bright promise betrayed in the 1982 World Cup semi-final by the worst refereeing decision of all time.

After that, not much, if you overlook the shaming of Olympique Marseille, whose European Cup win of 1993 was tainted by the subsequent bribery scandal.

last week, and more recently by Italy, which has only one left. And the temptation must be to look beyond coincidence to the emergence of some new factor, some shift in the balance of power.

In the European Cup, needing to beat Juventus to meet Ajax or Panathinaikos in the final, are Nantes — not a name to ring many bells with British fans but good enough to have beaten Spartak Moscow, conquerors of Blackburn Rovers, in the quarter-final. Seven times champions in a 50-year history, the club enjoys a marvellous reputation as a fountain of talent. This is the nursery that produced three current stars of the Italian league: Milan's Marcel Desailly, Juventus's Didier Deschamps and Sampdoria's Christian Karembeu, who are joined in the current French national selection by another Nantes old boy, Patrice Loko of Paris. Loko is a member of the current squad, Nico Oudec and Jean-Michel Ferri.

PSG are France's representatives in the Cup Winners' Cup, having beaten Parma to reach the last four. PSG, too, have lost several big stars in recent years, notably George Weah to AC Milan and Ginola to Newcastle. But the Parc des Princes is still the home of such considerable talents as Youri Djorkaeff, the current sensation of the national team, Rai, the Brazilian playmaker, and Loko.

**T**HE third club, Bordeaux, created the greatest excitement by overcoming a two-goal deficit from the first leg to beat Milan and reach the semi-final of the Uefa Cup. Even in the knowledge that Italians care only about the European Cup, this was a terrific achievement — and a tribute to the lost era of Cantona, a gifted little Basque with the most euphonious name in world football, Bixente Lizarazu. His team includes Christophe Dugarry and Zinedine Zidane, also important members of Aimé Jacquet's national squad.

Zidane, Djorkaeff and Loko are the men keeping Cantona, Ginola and Jean-Pierre Papin out of the side as *les Bleus* approach the European Championship with a confidence that must make them the best outside bet after the Croatians. And with the 1996 World Cup on the horizon, and a new national stadium going up in Saint-Denis, things are looking good for French football in general. It's a pity Nicolas De Stael isn't around to capture it but the players are painting the pictures now.

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### The dogged back-room team who forced a positive result

Duncan Mackay

**O**NLY Diane Modahl stood in the dock accused of a doping offence but behind her a team of doctors, scientists and lawyers worked non-stop for 19 months under the direction of her husband Vicente to prove her innocence.

Malcolm Brown, Britain's official team doctor at major events like the Olympics and world championships, put his job on the line by continuing to support her. "The fact that someone who had that much to lose was prepared to stand by me gave me strength," said Modahl.

But it was Professor Simon Gaskell, from the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, who came up with the evidence to clear her.

He first persuaded a British appeal panel that it was possible for bacteria in samples badly stored to create a positive test, as Mo-

dahl contended happened in Portugal. Then on the eve of the Cape Town meeting, he found the final piece in the jigsaw when he transformed one of Modahl's samples from innocent to guilty. Like many within the scientific community, Gaskell was outraged at what he saw as a miscarriage of justice.

Professor Paul Talalay, an expert on degradation, even travelled from America at his own expense to support Modahl at her appeal hearing, saying it was a moral issue and his conscience would not let him rest.

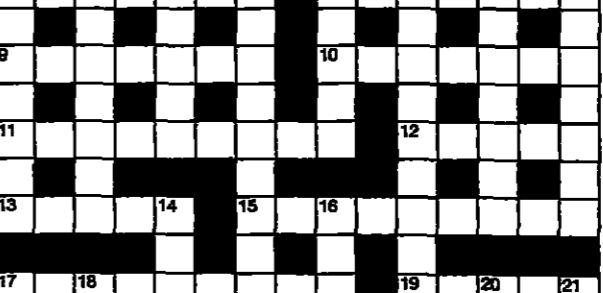
Finally there was the legal team led by Tony Morton-Hopner, a partner at the Princess of Wales's lawyers, Mishcon de Reya, and Edwin Glasgow QC. "Their professionalism, unselfish dedication, commitment and motivation, despite the difficulty of having to deal with uncooperative and less than frank organisations, was superb," said Modahl.

**The First (assistant director) is a short, bearded, psychotic, Spaniard. He is the rudest man I have ever met (apparently this is normal for a First). He shouts, he screams, he gesticulates wildly.**

**G2 page 4**

### Guardian Crossword No 20,610

Set by Hendra

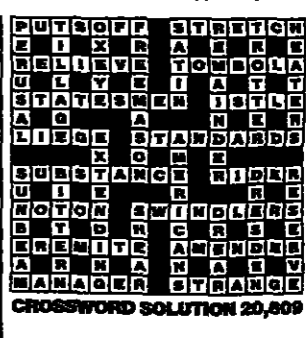


**Across**

- 1 Wine, small drink to which some guys are attached (4-3)
- 5 Two-seater wedding conveyance, going by air? (7)
- 9 Ill-matched with a French peer (7)
- 10 Boss well-versed in Morse, it turns out (7)
- 11 Hayseed for a mountain-goat (4-5)
- 12 A London court of noblemen (5)
- 13 Speech sound in Tswana's language? (5)
- 15 Wicked four in sea-trip (9)
- 17 He found himself winning on the pools! (9)
- 19 Letter to doctor for a lozenge (5)
- 22 French writer reversing into tree (5)
- 23 Hip-replacement recently? Hobby required! (9)

**Down**

- 1 Time enough, perhaps, to make stout (7)
- 2 Isle of Wight features almost unnecessary? (7)
- 3 Best black lead (5)
- 4 Driving course with game associations (4-5)
- 5 Bristling, hard at work around hospital (5)
- 6 Garrymade as holder of trophy? (3-6)
- 7 So long a toast at Number 10? (7)
- 8 Self-regarding sorts chewing stogies (7)



**Crossword Solution 20,609**

- 14 Middle-gear selected when overheating (9)
- 16 Rivet in safe act to open? (9)
- 17 One of twin air-intakes below a bridge (7)
- 18 Type most commonly taking first-class return in European republic (7)
- 20 Herb runs rings round daughter of Isaac (7)
- 21 Early days of Elizabethan favourite as depicted by Millais (7)
- 23 Appeal to president to show the way (5)
- 24 Dramatic piece for violin (5)

**Solution tomorrow**

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